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 MONEY OFF VOUCHER, PAGE 3

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Battle with Blair for Middle England
Major bids to claw back Tory ground

BY PHILIP WEBSTER AND NICHOLAS WOOD
JOHN MAJOR will challenge Tony Blair today for the allegiance of Middle England with promises designed to re-establish the Tories as the party of the family, common decency and tax cuts.
 In what will be seen as an attempted relaunch of the Conservative Party after its unprecedented collapse in the polls, the Prime Minister intends to confront Labour's resurgence by outlining a new agenda to take the Tories into the next election.
 He will tell the Conservative Central Council in Birmingham that the Government has achieved its 1979 objectives and that the time has come to map out a new programme - what he calls "the next phase of Conservatism".
 He is expected to claim that Tory policies, rather than Mr Blair's, are in tune with the needs of the middle classes, and signal new policies on education, public services and the welfare state.
 The initiative is understood to reflect the advice of senior strategists who say the party is in such dire trouble that only a total overhaul of its programme can save it from defeat. One has said: "If the Tory Party was a soap powder, we would have to take it off the market."
 Tony Blair will capitalise on that position today when he tells his party workers that the Conservatives are "on the run and panicking", and being forced to fight on Labour's agenda. "Middle-income Britain has been lied to, cheated and betrayed and will judge the Tories not by what they say but by what they do," he will tell the Labour women's conference in Derby.

Nuclear sell-off could raise £2bn
 The Government could raise up to £2 billion for tax cuts by a sale of atomic power stations Bob Hawley, chief executive of Nuclear Electric, said yesterday. But taxpayers might then have to provide a larger sum to help to meet the £9 billion cost of decommissioning older Magnox plants. Nuclear Electric wants these stations left in the public sector. **Page 21**
Rose Tiesman, page 23
 But Mr Major insisted yesterday that the Government had reached a turning point and would soon reap the benefits of unpopular policies. He also confirmed that the Government was looking at changes to the benefit system to boost the traditional two-parent family. During interviews in the West Midlands, he also hinted at a fresh crackdown on juvenile crime. "Mr Major will say today: 'In 1979, we promised to get Britain off its knees and on its feet: to end hyper-inflation, curb old-style union power, turn round loss-making nationalised industry, and begin to spread choice and ownership to everyone. We've done that. Now we must turn to the future.'"
 On the first day of the council yesterday, a series of Cabinet ministers delivered rallying calls, emphasising Mr Major's message that the Tories would win the battle for Middle England.
 Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, spoke of the need to reinforce discipline and respect in the home while ensuring that criminals paid a higher price for their crimes.

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, gave his strongest hint yet that he intends to cut taxes in November, while Jeffrey Huxley and Michael Heseltine led an assault on Mr Blair, saying that he was a "Trojan horse" for old-style union-dominated socialism.
 But Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, decided them last night, saying: "The Tory lie machine cannot obscure the gap between the promises of the Tories to middle-income Britain and the reality people confront of falling living standards, higher taxes and more crime."
 Mr Major's new approach will be seen by many Tories as an attempt to revive his back-to-basics crusade, which he redefined on BBC television yesterday using words that have peppered recent speeches by Mr Blair. He had been talking about the need for service, for duty and for people to contribute to the community. He did not seem to be talking about personal morality, and people did not believe that politicians should preach.
 "People care about duty, responsibility, and community," he said. "They have been fundamental to conservatism as far back as you can go. The Conservative Party stands for duty and that means we have to do what we believe is right."
 Mr Major confirmed that the Government was looking at benefit changes to discourage lone parents. "We are looking to see whether we can fashion ways of using the benefits system to encourage the generally accepted view that parenthood is really a matter for a family matter, and not beyond that," he said.

The best is yet to come, says Clarke signalling tax cuts

BY PHILIP WEBSTER
KENNETH CLARKE yesterday gave his clearest signal that he intends to cut taxes in his November Budget.
 In remarks that contrasted sharply with his recent cautious predictions on the return of the "feel-good" factor, the Chancellor declared: "With the economy growing healthier, the day when I will be able to cut taxes is getting nearer."
 In a speech to the Conservative Central Council in Birmingham, he pleased the party by heralding what he called "the return to our tax-cutting agenda". The Chancellor has been under fire from the Tory right for failing to offer hope of imminent tax cuts.
 But yesterday, in remarks that he admitted later had been "bullish", he left little doubt that he intended to use the next two Budgets to try to help John Major create an election-winning platform.
 Mr Clarke described himself as "a paid up optimist with a lot to be optimistic about". The economy was in better shape than for a generation. "This is the evidence that we are on course to deliver growth that is for keeps. Growth that will not turn into boom followed by bust. And over the next 12 months, there

will be even more reasons to be confident and cheerful, provided we stick to Conservative economics."
 He said that the Tories were the only political party that believed that cutting tax was good for the economy and the people. "We believe passionately that the people should keep more of their own money to spend as they choose, not as the state chooses."
 He derided Labour for failing to say anything about the economy, interest rates or income tax rates. "Tony Blair [Labour leader] and Gordon Brown [Shadow Chancellor] are rapidly becoming the Simon and Garfunkel of British politics. Their best-known tunes are *The Sound of Silence*." He added: "The worst is over. The best is yet to come."

Investors vote for takeover cash
 Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society members voted in favour of the £18 billion Lloyds Bank takeover, bringing cash windfalls for about 800,000 investors. Each eligible account will be paid £500 plus an expected 13 per cent of the balance. **Page 21**
Killer sues
 Nicholas Ingram, a British-born murderer due to be executed in Georgia on Thursday, is suing officials claiming that electrocution amounts to "cruel and unusual punishment". **Page 13**
Condemned, Weekend page 1

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Saying The Times overseas
 Canada \$1.25, Caribbean \$1.00, Central America \$1.00, Europe \$1.00, Hong Kong \$1.00, India \$1.00, Japan \$1.00, Korea \$1.00, Malaysia \$1.00, Mexico \$1.00, New Zealand \$1.00, Singapore \$1.00, South Africa \$1.00, Taiwan \$1.00, Thailand \$1.00, USA \$1.00, Venezuela \$1.00, Zimbabwe \$1.00



Cantona: will train young soccer hopefuls after jail sentence was quashed

Spared Cantona puzzles media with sardines

BY BILL FROST AND JOHN GOODBODY
ERIC CANTONA, football's enfant terrible, yesterday escaped a prison sentence for launching a flying kick at a Crystal Palace fan and then passed an enigmatic verdict on his critics.
 Moments after a judge quashed the jail term and substituted a 120-hour community service order, the Manchester United and French international striker was at his most delphic when he appeared before a press conference and said: "When seagulls follow a trawler, it is because they think sardines will be thrown into the sea."
 Suspecting they had been verbally attacked in some obscure way, reporters sought clarification from Maurice Watkins, a Manchester United director. He was just as baffled: "You can see from that the extreme pressure Eric has been under."
 Earlier Cantona, in outside grey wool jacket, allowed himself a brief smile and a shrug when an interpreter at Croydon Crown Court explained that the judge had quashed the two week prison sentence imposed after he admitted a kick at a Crystal Palace supporter.
 Cantona, who is expected to begin his community service with aspiring young footballers next week, may well now be leaving United for a foreign club. His lawyer said his "love affair with England has been affected by all this".
 The Frenchman's fans were still loyal yesterday. Sebastian Pennells, 13, from Kent, risked the anger of court officials when he approached his hero in the dock with a good luck card.
Transfer likely, page 3

59 die in bomb threat crash

All 59 people on a Romanian Airbus to Brussels were killed yesterday when their aircraft crashed shortly after taking off from Bucharest. There was an explosion before the airliner fell into a field. The same flight, operated by Tarom, had been the target of a bomb threat two weeks ago. **Page 11**

Tests spark return to traditional teaching

BY BEN PRESTON, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT
 NATIONAL tests for 11-year-olds are triggering a revival of traditional teaching methods in state primary schools, a study disclosed yesterday.
 Multiplication tables, spelling bees, public gold stars rewarding children's progress and dividing classes by ability for some subjects... all are making rapid returns as teachers revert to more formal techniques to prepare classes for Government tests next month.
 The research by London University provides the first evidence that the crusade waged by successive education secretaries against progressive teaching methods in primary schools is beginning to take effect. It shows that compulsory tests in English, mathematics and science are proving a catalyst for classroom change.
 Professor Margaret Brown, director of the National Assessment in Primary Schools project, said that the study showed a new culture was developing, with teachers moving away from the child-centred approaches to learning that have held sway in many classrooms since the 1960s. The pace of change - and the surprising lack of opposition to it - suggested that some teachers might previously have been "closest traditionalists", she said.
 Professor Brown added that some schools were dividing children by ability for different subjects and coaching them for the tests that more than 600,000 pupils will sit for the first time during the week of May 15. She said: "The atmosphere in some was very ill-plussed. They had children lined up in serried ranks in the hall, pencils up, like a GCSE examination at secondary school."
 The shift was most noticeable in science, where many teachers had relied on a "discovery" approach with
Continued on page 2, col 1

Short odds and blue skies for a sporting weekend



McColgan: favourite in London Marathon

BY ALAN HAMILTON
SPRING appears to have arrived at last, with weathermen predicting kind skies and warm temperatures for the weekend's three major sporting events in which only long-shot punters are likely to be disappointed.
 The London Weather Centre forecast yesterday that much of southern England would be basking in unaccustomed warmth by this afternoon. But it will not escape notice that the supposed benchmarks of English tradition are increasingly being invaded by outsiders: only one cartoon in today's Oxford boat race crew is a native-born Briton.
 Among today's 16 oarsmen ten are

foreign-born, a record number of outsiders. As a contest between the cream of British manhood, the Boat Race appears to have had it.
 The 141st Boat Race commences at 2.30pm. Bookmakers are convinced that Cambridge will win their third boat race in a row today. Ladbrokes were yesterday rating them as favourites at 9-2 on. The only long odds on offer - 250-1 - are for the unlikely outcome of a dead heat.
 Favourites are also predicted to win the London Marathon on Sunday. Britain's best hopes are Eamonn Martin of England for the men and Liz McColgan of Scotland for the women, but the smart money is on Dionicio Ceron of Mexico, last year's winner, or Steve Monaghan of

Australia, with Katrin Dörre of Germany expected to retain the women's title she won last year.
 The Coca-Cola Cup, once known as the League Cup Final, kicks off at Wembley on Sunday afternoon. Judged the third most important football encounter of the season after the FA Cup and the League Championship, this year's event is an unequal contest in the bookmakers' eyes. Liverpool are 3-1 on to win, with Bolton Wanderers trailing at 9-4 against. Rotten odds, but there's always the Grand National next Saturday.

Photograph, page 20
 Memory lane, page 34
 David Miller, page 40

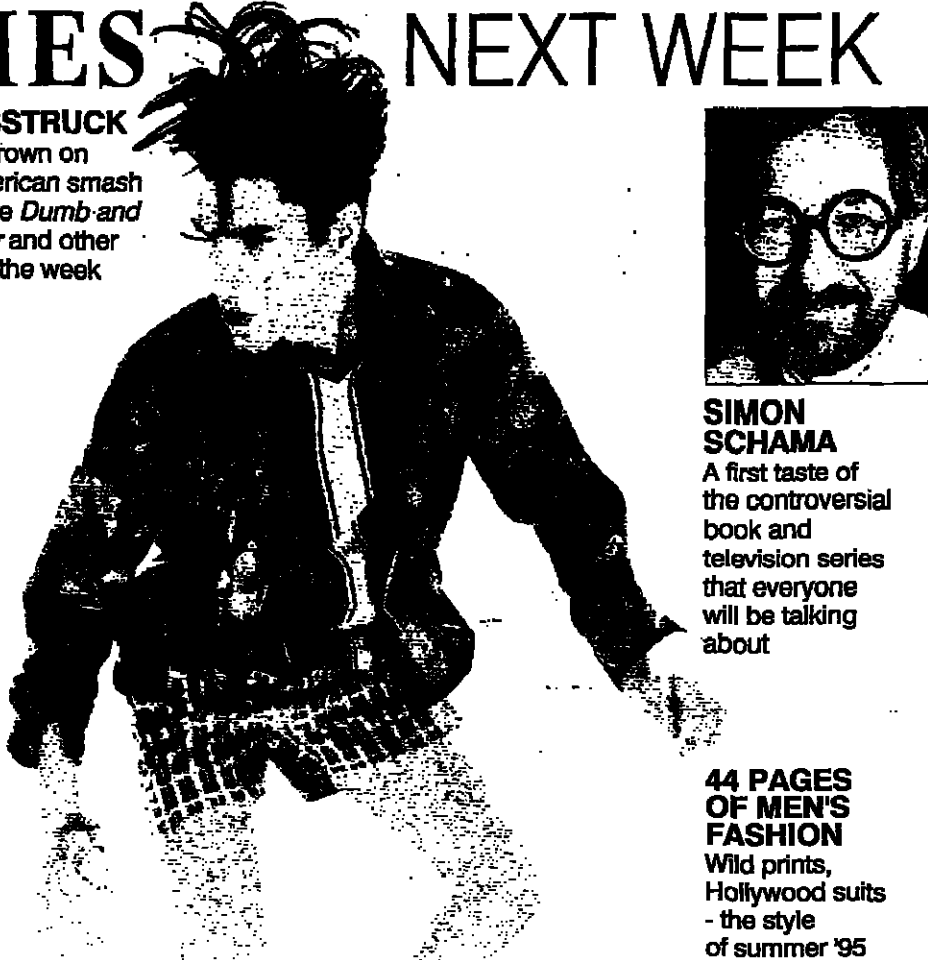
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 From the Big Bang to Black Holes
 This book merits a chair's wonder to a genius's intellect. We journey into Hawking's universe, while marveling at his calm. *Sunday Times*
STEPHEN HAWKING
 Introduction by Carl Sagan
 Photograph, page 20
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IN THE TIMES NEXT WEEK



DUMBSTRUCK
Geoff Brown on
the American smash
hit movie *Dumb and
Dumber* and other
films of the week

**CULT TV'S
HOT 100**
Angels, aliens,
comedy, cop,
doc and schlock
shows - your
essential guide
to television's
cult classics



**SIMON
SCHAMA**
A first taste of
the controversial
book and
television series
that everyone
will be talking
about

**44 PAGES
OF MEN'S
FASHION**
Wild prints,
Hollywood suits
- the style
of summer '95

13 PAGES OF SPORT ON MONDAY



**BOLTON V
LIVERPOOL**
Rob Hughes
at the Coca-Cola
Cup Final



**OXFORD
BLUES?**
David Miller
at the 141st
Boat Race



WINNERS AND FINISHERS
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of London marathon finishers

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and a total prize of £25,000

THE BEST SPORT REPORTS AND WRITERS

Lord Chief Justice criticises shortfall in secure beds

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Government came under fire from the Lord Chief Justice yesterday over the "alarming shortfall" of about 2,000 secure hospital beds for mentally disturbed offenders.

Lord Taylor of Gosforth said that it was vital for public protection that "appropriate secure accommodation is available to the courts at the time it is needed. In relation to the criminal justice system, this is a responsibility of the Government, which has been reassured on many occasions by the Home Secretary."

Lord Taylor, addressing a seminar at Liverpool University, said: "Recent cases have unfortunately raised doubts as to whether this commitment is, however, being properly undertaken when the danger-

ous offender is suffering from a mental disorder.

"In my view it is no more acceptable for the Government to deny the courts the ability to order the detention of disturbed and dangerous offenders in secure hospitals than it would be to deny them the ability to send ruthless criminals to prison."

Lord Taylor called for urgent action to remedy "the alarming shortfall in provision which has been revealed". He said he understood that steps might be in hand to remedy the problem.

The Lord Chief Justice's comments come in the wake of a series of court cases where judges have ordered ministers to appear before them because of a shortage of beds for

offenders. He said that in such cases the feelings of victims had to be borne in mind.

Virginia Bottomley, the Health Secretary, has faced six threats from judges to summon her to court to account for the shortage of beds, but in each case except one, where she was represented in court, a bed was rapidly found.

Dr Trevor Turner, consultant psychiatrist at St Bartholomew's and Hackney Hospital in east London, welcomed the Lord Chief Justice's intervention. "We can't get secure beds for love nor money: a third of our general ward is full of patients awaiting trial," he said.

"I've been involved in two cases where judges have threatened to summon Mrs Bottomley to court, and pressure was immediately put on to open up another bed."

Marjorie Wallace, chief executive of Sane, the mental health charity, said: "It's a scandal that it should get to the stage of the Lord Chief Justice having to point out what we and the Government and everyone in the profession has known for many years, that there are simply not enough secure accommodation beds."

There were 712 medium secure beds in Britain, despite a government report that recommended at least 1,700. Mrs Wallace said.

Booking a roller coaster start to marriage

BY KATHRYN KNIGHT

AFTER 150 years of tying the knot in the stark municipal surroundings of a register office, couples celebrating a civil wedding ceremony will from today be able to make their vows in such exotic locations as Brighton Pavilion or on top of a rollercoaster at Blackpool Pleasure Beach.

The 1994 Marriages Act allows local authorities to consider a range of premises for the solemnisation of marriage. Thousands of institutions, from stately homes to working men's clubs, will apply for a licence.

Claire Johnson, 29, a computer operator, and Jamie Wilkinson, 26, a communications manager, hope to be one of the first couples to take advantage of the new law. In the autumn they plan to marry at Bolebrook Castle, Henry VIII's old hunting lodge in East Sussex.

"I didn't want a church wedding and Jamie didn't want to marry in a register office," said Miss Johnson. "This way we both feel we have the perfect medium."

For those less interested in an historical setting, the Pavilion service station at Farningham Corner on the M2 is also in the running. "We think it's a great place for a wedding," Peter Hope, the manager, said.

Councils win test case over compensation for tearaways

BY A STAFF REPORTER

LOCAL authorities won a High Court test case yesterday against being forced to pay compensation for crimes committed by teenagers in their care when they have done all that they can to exercise parental control.

Two judges ruled that Lancashire and Shropshire county councils were unlawfully ordered to pay bills running into thousands of pounds. Lord Justice Leggatt and Mr Justice Buxton said that courts and magistrates should not take the view, out of sympathy for victims of crime, that local authorities could afford to pay compensation and it was reasonable for them to do so, even if there was no criticism of the way they had carried out their responsibilities.

In a judgment that will be welcomed by councils all over the country having to meet the bill for the criminal escapades of tearaways, they quashed compensation orders made by youth courts in Burnley, Preston and Telford relating to four offenders responsible for a string of burglaries and other crimes.

The judges said in a joint judgment: "Where... the local authority is found to have done everything that it reasonably and properly could to protect the public from the young offender, it would be wholly unreasonable and unjust that it should bear a financial penalty." It would be

contrary to law to place the authority in a worse position than that of the natural parent. The judges added: "The parental responsibility that a local authority has for young persons in its care does not carry with it an obligation to answer for the young persons' defaults... so long as the authority has properly exercised such powers over the young persons as are conferred on it by its parental responsibility."

A local authority might often be entrusted with the care of a young person who was already an offender or had criminal or anti-social tendencies - and the steps it could take to restrain such a person might well be limited, said the judges.

A girl of 15 who lived in a children's home in Wellington provided by Shropshire Council, damaged acar and wounded two police officers with a kitchen knife. After placing her under a two-year supervision order, Telford magistrates directed the council to pay the car owner £920 and £100 to each of the injured policemen, even though they had no criticism of the council.

The judges said a court must consider whether the local authority had fulfilled its duty "to such an extent as would make it unreasonable to order it to pay compensation". This had not occurred in the cases they had considered.

Labour court threat over Major on TV

Labour is threatening legal action against the BBC after its refusal to withdraw next Monday's *Panorama* interview with John Major, three days before the Scottish elections. The party is considering calling for a judicial review if the BBC fails to reschedule the 40-minute interview to a less politically sensitive time.

Alastair Campbell, Tony Blair's press secretary, wrote to the corporation: "We are advised that the BBC is liable to judicial review for breach of the impartiality undertaking... spelt out in its producer guidelines." The BBC immediately replied that it had not breached the guidelines and had no intention of withdrawing the programme. Conservative Council, pages 8, 9

Girl finds mother's body

An eight-year-old girl found the body of her strangled mother when she arrived home from school, police said yesterday. Detectives believe Naureen Akhtar, 29, was murdered by a burglar who escaped with a video recorder from the house in Cobden Crescent, Oxford, on Thursday. Her daughter, Khamran, called an ambulance, saying that she thought her mother had been electrocuted by TV equipment but a pathologist said she had been strangled.

Belfast talks in balance

Sinn Féin and Government officials yesterday held their first meeting in more than a month to try to break the deadlock that has prevented ministers from meeting the party. But after an hour of talks in Belfast with senior officials from the Northern Ireland Office Martin McGuinness said he did not know whether a ministerial meeting was any closer. He said he would review the talks with Sinn Féin colleagues over the weekend.

Terror boy detained

A 6ft schoolboy with a knife and syringe who terrorised London Underground passengers was given seven years' detention by the Old Bailey. The boy, of Kensal Green, north London, was 14 when he began a nine-month series of robberies a year ago. He threatened to inject one youth with the AIDS virus. Judge Goldstein did not accept that a deprived upbringing could be blamed. "My view is that downright evil prompted you to commit these offences."

Benefits curb attacked

Government plans to target single mothers as part of a drive to curb the £80 billion social security bill were attacked yesterday by Labour. Donald Dewar, Shadow Social Security Secretary, accused ministers of a return to "scapegoat policies with single parents again in the firing line". John Major confirmed yesterday that ministers were considering ways of changing the benefit system to discourage single parenthood.

Madness packs cinemas

Alan Bennett's much-praised film *The Madness Of King George* is breaking box office records in several West End cinemas in spite of failing to win a mantlepiece of Oscars. Many evening performances of the film, which stars Nigel Hawthorne as the disintegrating monarch, have sold out. Even Quentin Tarantino's cult hit *Pulp Fiction* and the Oscar-garlanded *Forrest Gump* have been easier to get into during the past week. Leading article, page 17

National tests spark revival of traditional teaching

Continued from page 1 children encouraged to find things out for themselves from experiments. Professor Brown said the tests required factual knowledge and classes practised for them by, for example, learning the names of the planets or parts of plants. She added: "In mathematics, I have never seen so much long division."

Ministers have long blamed the dominance of progressive teaching methods for the poor performance of primary schools. Government inspectors have identified the sector as

the weak link in state education and last year reported that one third of lessons for children aged eight to 11 were unsatisfactory.

The research by King's College and the Institute of Education was based on 32 primary schools in four local authorities across England. About 26 of the schools carried out all or part of last summer's pilot tests.

Professor Brown said that some schools, mainly in inner London, remained loyal to progressive methods, but even they were not immune from change. The combination of

testing and the national curriculum was forcing a reassessment. "There is a cultural change. Teachers are thinking much harder about what and how they teach to ensure that children are covering the right stuff."

In one primary, mathematics sets included children of different ages as teachers abandoned the conventional year-group structure. While schools had not introduced specialist subject teaching for older pupils, some had reformed the timetable so the best subject teacher took the top set.

Professor Brown said that all the

schools in the study were adopting a more formal approach, including spelling and tables tests or wall charts showing how many stars pupils had earned. She said the best teachers were harnessing the best aspects of progressive and traditional methodologies.

Chris Woodhead, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools, said the findings were encouraging and showed that primary schools were moving in the right direction by focusing pupils' attention on knowledge and understanding.

The Education Department said the popularity of testing was underlined by demands from schools for more than one million extra copies of a leaflet explaining the tests to parents. The three main classroom unions have abandoned the boycott over workload, which disrupted national testing for seven and 4-year-olds for the past two years. But the 11-year-old tests remain the most likely source of future conflict with head teachers determined to stop the results used as the basis for primary school league tables.

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£5m bid for Cantona fuels transfer talk

Manchester Utd may lose tarnished star despite ruling

By Bill Frost and John Goodbody

ERIC CANTONA, the Manchester United striker, seems likely to leave English football despite walking free from court yesterday after a judge quashed a two-week jail sentence for attacking a spectator. The player was ordered to perform 120 hours of community service working with aspiring young footballers.

Internazionale of Milan is reported to have made a £5 million offer for Cantona, 28, who has been suspended from professional football until October. Other bidders are waiting in the wings.

"Negotiations with Manchester United over Cantona's future have been suspended because of this case. They will start again... but during these negotiations we will have to take everything into consideration," Jean-Jacques

Bertrand, Cantona's lawyer, said.

Manchester United may be prepared to accept bids for Cantona, whose contract expires in 1996, despite his contribution to the club's double triumph in the Premier League and FA Cup last season. Maurice Watkins, United's solicitor and a club director, said: "I hope Eric will stay. There is no reason why he should not, and he can have a greater sense of belief in English justice now."

Two dozen of the player's fans allowed into court on a ticket-only basis clapped and cheered as the decision was announced. Judge Ian Davies said: "We express the hope that he will be able to be used in carrying out his public duty to the community by helping young people who aspire to be

professional footballers... and others who merely aspire to play the game and enjoy it."

Judge Davies told Cantona, who has been on £500 bail since the jailing, that Matthew Simmons, the 20-year-old Crystal Palace fan attacked by Cantona, had indulged in conduct that would "provoke the most stoic". Earlier the court had been told how the French international was subjected to a tirade of racist and obscene abuse when sent off after an incident involving a Palace player.

The judge went on: "Cantona reacted in a way which was out of character. Whatever the defendant's status he is entitled to be dealt with for the gravity of the offence and not sentenced to make an example of a public figure."

Cantona has been fined £11,500 by Manchester United, £10,000 by the Football Association, and with player bonuses he could face a total financial penalty of more than £40,000, the judge said. He had also been banned from playing for eight months "and that must have financial repercussions".

Mr Simmons has been charged with two counts of threatening behaviour. He has pleaded not guilty and will be tried at Croydon Magistrates' Court next month.

Yesterday the Manchester probation service was not clear what Cantona will be doing with his 120 hours. Bob Mathers, the deputy chief probation officer for Greater Manchester, said the judge's remarks about work linked to young people and football would be taken into account but the sentence had to be seen as a punishment.

Harry Fletcher, assistant general secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, said Cantona would have to start the sentence within ten working days of the court decision. The footballer would have to report to a community service officer on Monday or Tuesday to be assessed.

Enigmatic verdict, page 1

Philosophical turn puzzles academics

By Andrew Pierce

ERIC Cantona's philosophical riposte puzzled most observers yesterday but impressed few academics. Seemingly inspired by Chekhov's *The Seagull*, he declared to startled journalists: "When seagulls follow a trawler, it is because they think sardines will be thrown into the sea."

But it was not only journalists who struggled to decipher the cryptic aphorism. Roger Scruton, Professor of philosophy at Boston University, was unimpressed. "I fear we will not be rushing Mr Cantona's offering into print. It's hardly Chekhov."

"Sport has always had a philosophical side to it. For the Greeks, sport was a major religious and aesthetic exercise. To Homer it was the most important thing after war. But I don't think this is the same league."

Dr David Stacey, Professor of History at the LSE, said: "I think he is telling you journalists that sardines are the equivalent of the car-



Chekhov: Seagull may be to blame

and you are the eagles waiting to devour the remains of his life." Cantona is not the first French footballer with a philosophical turn. Albert Camus, the existentialist author, was a professional goalkeeper for Algiers. But Eric's oeuvre so far comprises only *La Philosophie de Cantona*, in which he writes: "Life is always too cruel. All we can do is say, let's try to pass the ball and let the sun shine. Let's hope it shines on everyone."

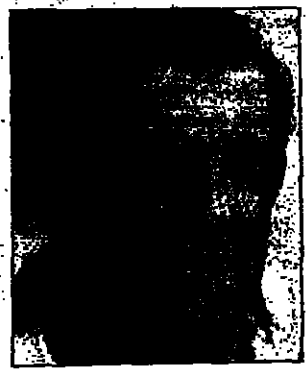
Dooley given driving ban

By Kate Alderson

WADE DOOLEY, the former England rugby international and serving police officer, was banned from driving for 18 months yesterday after admitting drink-driving. He had knocked down a 14-year-old girl while twice the legal alcohol limit.

Dooley, 37, a community policeman in Blackpool, has had his case referred to his deputy chief constable, who will decide if he should face disciplinary proceedings. Magistrates in Blackburn, Lancashire, fined Dooley, of Weston, near Kirkham, £300 and endorsed his licence after he admitted committing the offence on the evening of January 14 this year.

Rochelle Musket, 14, ran out from behind a bus into the path of Dooley's Land Rover



Dooley: twice limit

Discovery in Kirkham. She spent three weeks in hospital with serious head and abdominal injuries. She has now returned to school.

A breath test revealed that Dooley, England's most capped second row forward, had 73 micrograms of alcohol

in his body. The legal limit is 35. Allan Cobain, for the defence, told the 35-minute hearing that Dooley had played for the Preston Grasshoppers rugby team at Birmingham on the day of the accident and drank three or four pints of beer on an empty stomach. He said Dooley's police career hung in the balance.

The court heard that Dooley, who has been a police officer for 21 years and who retired from international rugby in 1991, had extended his "heartfelt sympathy" to Miss Musket.

John Holt, for the prosecution, said: "It is clear that Mr Dooley had little chance of avoiding a collision." Statements by two witnesses, a policeman and a clergyman, said Dooley had no chance of avoiding the girl.



Joanna van der Lande of Bonhams with the Roman mosaic glass, made in the 1st century AD, and valued at up to £200,000

Couple bowled over by perfect Roman relic

By Dalia Albergue
Arts Correspondent

A GLASS bowl that was kept in an attic for years has been identified as a 2,000-year-old Roman artefact worth up to £200,000.

The exquisite blue and white mosaic piece is in such good condition that it looks almost as new as the day it left the 1st century craftsman who made it. The owners, an anonymous mid-

Roman and probably worth a few thousand pounds, which they said would have been "a nice little nest-egg for retirement". They kept it in layers of newspaper.

Joanna van der Lande, head of antiquities at Bonhams, who identified the piece, said: "I initially said it was worth £50,000 and they were delighted with that." The bowl was stolen from a Roman grave in a British-owned mine at Tharsis, in the Huelva Province of Spain, between

1866 and 1876. The robber, a local man, was caught by the mine guards and the bowl was confiscated and placed in the mining company's private museum. So many Roman antiquities were being unearthed during this period that mining companies were starting their own private museums. The owner's great grandfather, a mine official, was eventually given the piece when the museum closed. The area was a rich outpost of the Roman empire where

silver and other minerals were mined well into the 5th century. Miss Van der Lande said that such a fine object was probably originally owned by a wealthy mining official.

The bowl, 6.5in in diameter, is the only known undamaged design of its kind. A comparable piece is in the Metropolitan Museum of New York, but it is not perfect. Bonhams will be offering the bowl for sale on July 4. It is estimated to fetch between £100,000 and £200,000.



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THE SUNDAY TIMES

When daddy came home

There was jealousy on both sides. The children who had mum to themselves in the war now had to share her with a man who was almost a stranger.

A soldier who for years had dreamed of lying in his own bed with his wife would have to fight a furious little son or daughter who thought they had a right to be there too...

Behind the smiles of VE-Day, the truth about families at the end of the war.

The Sunday Times tomorrow

Attorney-General praises changes and rejects 'misguided criticism'

Serious Fraud Office fights off attacks to win bigger role

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Serious Fraud Office was given a ringing endorsement by the Government yesterday when the Attorney-General announced it would not be abolished but would have an expanded role to tackle more cases.

The reprieve, announced in the House of Commons by Sir Nicholas Lyell, QC, ended months of damaging speculation about whether the department would be absorbed into the Crown Prosecution Service. The decision came weeks before the department, which had attracted continual criticism over a series of high-profile cases, faces its biggest test to date with the trial of the Maxwell brothers on fraud charges in May.

Sir Nicholas told MPs that he had accepted the recommendations of a report by Rex Davie, a former Cabinet Of-

fice official, that the fraud office should be retained as a separate organisation and not merged with the Crown Prosecution Service. That report also proposed new criteria for which frauds should be handled by the department, which was formed in 1988. These would involve "a heavier caseload for and some enlargement of the Serious Fraud Office".

A spokesman for the department said that at present it took on cases that involved more than £5 million. Under the change, it is likely to take on all frauds involving more than £1 million.

George Staple, the director since 1992, welcomed the statement and the recommendations of the Davie report. "This ends the uncertainty over the future of the office and points the way to more

effective investigation and prosecution of serious and complex fraud in the future."

In his statement in the Commons, Sir Nicholas said that "despite the often misguided criticism to which the prosecuting agencies have been subject, the Serious Fraud Office and the fraud divisions of the CPS have made real advances since they were set up in the 1980s."

"The Serious Fraud Office has brought to trial 141 major cases involving 309 defendants of whom 191 have been convicted. More significantly, in over 75 per cent of the cases brought to trial by the SFO at least one person has been convicted, usually the principal defendant."

There could be "no room for complacency", Sir Nicholas said. But it could be said with confidence that without the



The trial of Kevin Maxwell, left, and his brother Ian next month will present the Serious Fraud Office with its biggest challenge since it was formed in 1988

present structures and organisation many of the heaviest cases successfully brought to conviction would never have been tried at all.

Once the recommendations were in place, the ability of the department and the prosecution service "to perform their heavy tasks will be significantly enhanced."

The Davie report also proposed clarification of the role of the police in Serious Fraud

Office cases and closer co-ordination between the department and the prosecution service, including a common approach on policy and more interchange of staff.

In the wake of the recent Home Office referrals of the 1990 convictions in the Guinness case back to the Court of Appeal, the department was in crucial need of a seal of approval. The referral of the Guinness cases, which

the department regarded as its flagship convictions on City fraud, was the latest in a string of embarrassments or failed prosecutions.

Yesterday's decision is a victory for Mr Staple, and for the Attorney-General. Sir Nicholas favoured retaining the department as a separate entity and succeeded in persuading his Cabinet colleagues it should survive in that form.

Stampede for £20m lottery jackpot

Sales of tickets for the National Lottery are 15 per cent higher this week, raising expectations of the first £20 million jackpot, according to Camelot, the operator.

David Rigg, Camelot's director of communications, said that long queues were expected today at the 15,000 retailers selling lottery tickets. As there was no jackpot winner last week, the £10.2 million jackpot has been added to this week's top prize. Statistically, the jackpot is likely to be shared by several people.

Foot improves

Michael Foot, 81, the former Labour Party leader, is said to be making a full recovery after surgery for an intestinal problem at the Royal Free Hospital in London. A hospital spokesman said that Mr Foot, who retired from Parliament in 1992, would be released next week.

Lover jailed

A teenager who strangled his lover with a dog lead after she threatened to tell his parents about their affair was sentenced to life custody for murder. Martina O'Connell, 19, of East Barnet, Hertfordshire, said he felt "disgusted" over the affair with Paula Mottram, 43.

Scope boss quits

Ann Robinson, the chief executive of Scope, formerly the Spastics Society, resigned yesterday after only 18 months in the job. A spokeswoman said a legal agreement prevented her giving reasons for the resignation but "it did not involve anything untoward".

Smith in the clear

The showjumper Harvey Smith will not face charges after a crash last December in which three people died, police said yesterday. He was returning home to Bingley, Yorkshire, from Catterick races when a Ford Escort collided with his horsebox on the A59 near York.

Sleeping giant

The number of passengers using the London to Fort William sleeper service, which is under threat of closure from next month, has risen over the past four years from 13,500 to 14,600 — more than half its capacity. — John Watts, the Rail Minister, said in a written reply.

Axes at dawn

Enfield Council in north London is to seek compensation from the Highways Agency after a 200-year-old tree in a park in the borough was felled in a dawn operation. Residents and councillors wanted the 150ft cedar, which blocked a road-widening scheme, preserved or moved.

Father stole coal

An unemployed man of 26 who stole six lumps of coal from a private colliery in February, when one of his four children was three days old, was given a conditional discharge at Ammanford, Dyfed. His MP accused the Crown Prosecution Service of wasting money and time.

Parents foot bill to save teachers

By A STAFF REPORTER

PARENTS asked to pay £1 a week to prevent redundancies at a primary school appeared to be rallying to the cause yesterday.

Governors at Welford and Sulby Endowed School near Northampton claimed they could not cover a shortfall of £7,500 in their operating budget for the coming year unless parents of the 114 pupils agreed to make a weekly contribution for each child to bridge the gap between income and expenditure.

A letter to parents earlier this week spoke of "an exceptionally serious situation" which meant the small village school would probably not be able to keep all its staff without assistance. Russ Jones, the headmaster said: "The early signs are encouraging: most parents have indicated that they would be willing to help out financially."

The move comes in the wake of national protests from schools facing cuts after the Government declined to fund the teachers' 2.7 per cent pay rise. Governors at some schools have refused to set legal budgets this year and others have resigned in protest.

Although state education must be free by law, parents at Welford and Sulby have been asked to contribute towards the cost of lunchtime supervision for children. A part-time teacher due to leave this summer is not being replaced, but staff numbers would have to be reduced by a further part-time teacher, it is claimed, if sufficient cash pledges were not forthcoming.

The Rev Richard Cattle, chairman of the governors, said the school had been determined to try to retain the existing "excellent" teaching team and keep the ratio of staff to pupils as high as possible.

Pop tycoon mixes rock and rail

By JONATHAN PRYNN, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

PETE WATERMAN, the pop tycoon who launched the musical careers of Kylie Minogue and Jason Donovan, today takes over Britain's biggest train set — the six locomotives and 200 carriages of British Rail's special charter services.

Mr Waterman, 48, a self-confessed rail addict and former train spotter, became the first private sector operator of BR passenger services at mid-night last night. He is thought to have paid £10 million for the assets of BR's charter and special trains unit.

His plans for the company include running daily steam services on the rail network this summer for the first time since 1968 and operating 1950s-style day trip services to traditional seaside resorts including Blackpool and Rhyl.

He will also take responsibility for Saturday "football specials" and is planning to apply to Brian Mawhinney, the Transport Secretary, for a relaxation of the rules that ban alcohol being served on the trains. "If you don't put these

in cattle waggons and treat them decently they won't behave like hooligans," he said. He claims the support of the British Transport Police and the Football Association.

He will also operate luxury "Land Cruises" for tourists offering silver service meals from kitchens containing the last working on-train cooking ranges on Britain's railways.

The company takes delivery of its first three locomotives, 30-year-old former BR diesels, this morning. The engines will be decked out in black livery embossed with the Waterman Railways logo.

Mr Waterman, who was given his first Hornby train set at the age of nine, said he hoped to rekindle the magic of rail travel. His first job was as a BR fireman in Wolverhampton before achieving fame in the 1980s as one third of the successful pop producer trio, Stock, Aitken and Waterman. Flying Scotman Railways, his company, is already the biggest owner of restored diesel locomotives in the country.



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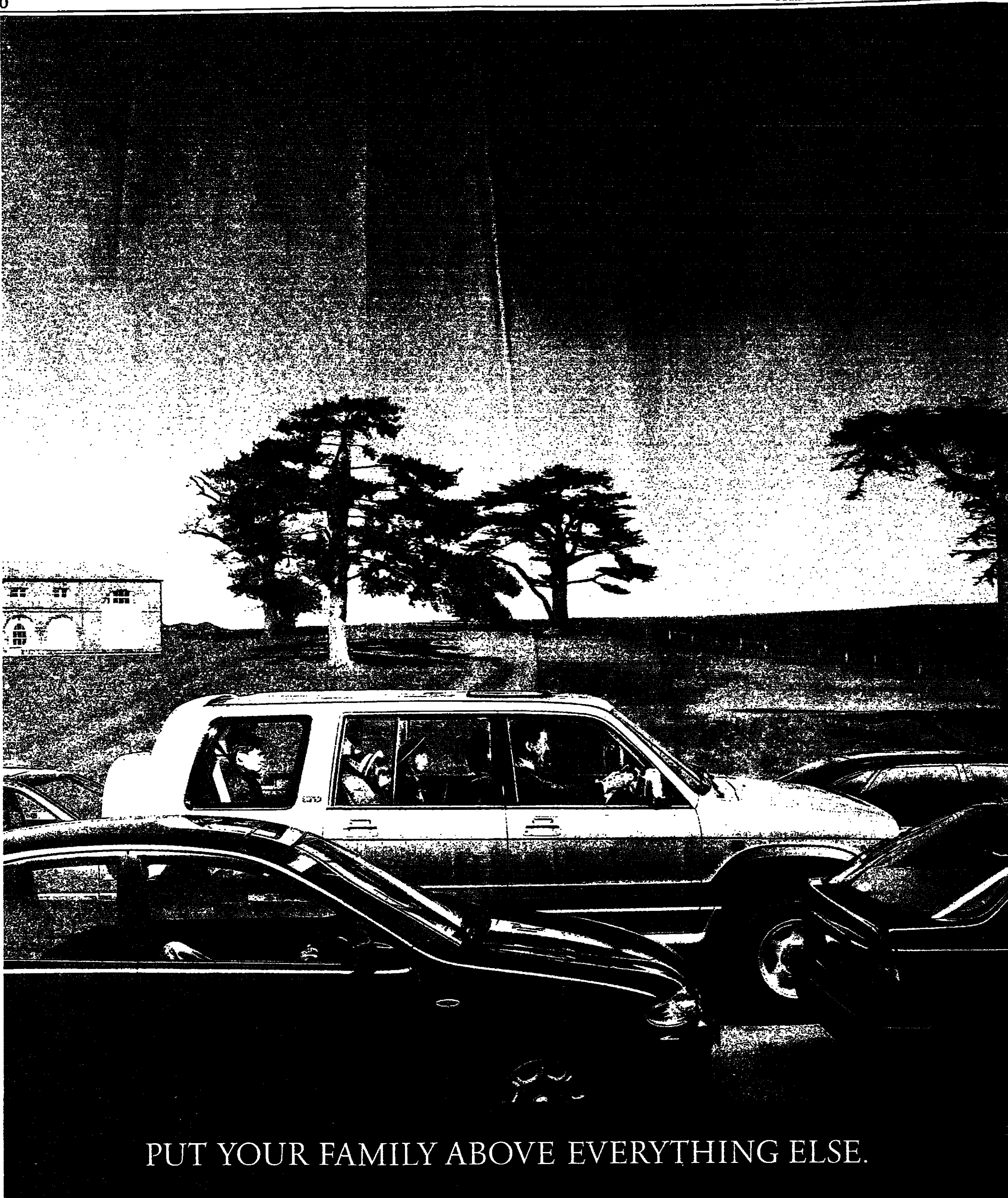
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ACTIONAID 

Business travellers may be denied travel perk

Employers press staff to hand over free flights

By HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

BUSINESS travellers who qualify for free flights under airline loyalty schemes may be forced to hand over "air miles" and other benefits to their employers.

A growing number of companies, frustrated at paying for their staff to travel without receiving what they regard as the discounts, are putting pressure on airlines to give the "frequent flyer miles" to them rather than the individual traveller. The European Commission has been asked to look again at the way the schemes are operated.

The Business Travel Liaison Group has been set up to represent 25 of Britain's biggest companies, which spend more than £500 million a year on foreign travel. Andrew Fletcher, the chairman, who is responsible for British Aerospace's travel budget, said: "We all agree that the benefits should come to us. It does not necessarily mean that the companies themselves should

get the bonuses — they could, for example, put them into a general pot for sharing among other employees or give them to charity. But it seems wrong that individuals should get the benefit when they have been sent somewhere on business."

Some of the group's members have banned the use of loyalty programmes and others have suggested that they all order their staff to cash in air miles on the same day, so throwing the airline industry into chaos. "I don't think that is practical but it is an indication of the strength of feeling there is about this," said Mr Fletcher.

A MORI poll for an international business travel agency, Carlson Wagonlit, showed that 58 per cent of company staff agreed that frequent flyer schemes should benefit the company and not the individual. Richard Lovell, group managing director of Wagonlit Travel, said: "There are now so many frequent

flyer miles systems in operation that it is the equivalent of 5 to 10 per cent of the cost of an airline ticket. Why should this not be passed on to the company who paid for it?"

George Paton, chairman of the Guild of Business Travel Agents, agreed. "I have always believed that companies should be the beneficiaries on the basis that he who pays for the ticket should get the benefit," he said. "Some companies, however, think that this is some kind of benign benefit to their employee which helps morale."

It is estimated that more than 40 million unused airline tickets are outstanding under the schemes. In America almost 10 per cent of companies insist that business travellers hand back their benefits so that they can be used to obtain free or cut-price tickets for other staff. Those that do this claim to have saved between 12 and 15 per cent on travel.

Several large companies in

Germany are trying to trace all the accumulated miles outstanding to individual staff members who use Lufthansa as a first move towards asking for them to be handed over. In Sweden leading companies such as Saab-Scania, Electrolux and Volvo are pressing SAS, the national carrier, to award the benefits to them rather than their staff.

Virgin Atlantic gives companies the option of taking mileage points as well as the accumulated credits given to the individual traveller as part of its Virgin Corporate Freeway frequent flyer scheme. About 250 companies have taken up the scheme since it was introduced a year ago.

British Airways Executive Club — to which 90 per cent of those questioned in the MORI survey belonged — remains adamant that the accumulated miles should go to the passenger. "It is a reward to the individual for flying with BA," a spokesman said.



Matthews: "Being a bishop at 40 is wonderful: it is the only thing I know that makes you feel young"

Woman bishop joins Anglican summit team

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

ONE of the five women bishops in the worldwide Anglican communion has been appointed as a member of the influential planning group for the Lambeth Conference, the ten-yearly meeting for leaders of the Church's 70 million members.

The Right Rev Victoria Matthews, suffragan bishop of Toronto, has been meeting the ten other Anglican leaders in London this week who are planning the agenda for 1998.

It will be the first Lambeth Conference with women bishops present. Supporters of female priests in England are hoping that women, who are eligible for consecration as bishops in America and New Zealand as well as Canada, might be allowed into the episcopate here early in the next millennium.

Bishop Matthews, whose consecration in February last year was the first of a woman bishop not to be disrupted by protesters, said: "I hope that the Church of England will in

due time see its way to including women in the episcopate.

"More immediately I look forward to other women in the episcopate in Canada. I look forward to the day when gender is not an issue in the episcopacy in the same way as it is not an issue in the priesthood in Canada."

"People often say I am too young to be a bishop. Being a bishop at 40 is wonderful because it is the only thing I know that makes you feel young."

Canon John Peterson, Secretary-General of the Anglican Communion, said: "A woman certainly brings a dimension that has not before been seen in the male hierarchy of the Church and, of course, we welcome that."

The conference is expected to consider the issue of sexuality, and the refugee and persecution crises facing church members in different parts of the world.

At Your Service. Weekend, page 2

ICI chief appointed to press watchdog

By ALEXANDRA FREAN

THE Press Complaints Commission has moved to strengthen its public image by appointing one of Britain's most respected industrialists, Sir Denis Henderson, chairman of ICI, to its influential appointments committee.

Sir Denis will be joined on the committee by Sir Geoffrey Holland, vice-chancellor of Exeter University. The other existing members of the committee, chaired by Lord Wakeham of Maldon, are Harry Roche, chairman and chief executive of Guardian Media Group, and Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Shadow Lord Chancellor.

The committee will now appoint its main board, which adjudicates on complaints. Lord Wakeham's attempt to appoint Sir Bernard Ingham, Baroness Thatcher's former press secretary, were thwarted two weeks ago by Lord Irvine, who was concerned that Sir Bernard was not sufficiently impartial.

Front-runners for a place on the board include Dame Elizabeth Smith, wife of the late Labour leader John Smith, and Baron Tordoff of Knutsford, the Liberal Democrat chief whip in the Lords.

Divorcée drove off cliff after dentistry

By A STAFF REPORTER

A WOMAN who thought that she looked like a monster after having a tooth extracted drove to her death over a cliff, a coroner was told yesterday.

Diana Humphries, 51, worried that her dental problem had made her "less than perfect", her brother told an inquest at Dorchester, Dorset. "It had become an obsession that left her fearing she looked like a monster," Colin Gosney said. He had tried to comfort Mrs Humphries two days before her car was found halfway down a 60ft cliff at Weymouth. Her naked body was discovered on the beach below.

Mrs Humphries, a divorcee from Yeovil, Somerset, had been stopped by traffic police at 4am on the day of her death last December. She was dressed only in a nightdress but was allowed to continue after saying she had had domestic troubles.

A pathologist gave her cause of death as drowning. Recording an open verdict, the coroner said: "I am sorry that something so trivial to the rest of us as having a tooth out should have thrown her into distress."

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ACTIONAID

Hanley takes whip to 'Trojan horse' Blair

By NICHOLAS WOOD, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR is a "Trojan horse" for a Labour party still tethered to the old politics of envy and class warfare, Jeremy Hanley said yesterday as senior ministers sought to break the spell the Labour leader appears to have cast over much of Middle England.

Against the background of opinion polls suggesting that the middle-class is flocking to Labour, the Conservative Party chairman portrayed Mr Blair as a hypocritical opportunist stealing Tory clothes to cloak his "naked ambition".

Mr Hanley told the central council: "Mr Blair is a Trojan horse, inside which lurks the trade union bosses, the apostles of the politics of envy, the politically correct, the loonies from Labour councils, the luvvies and the Lefties."

On a host of issues, he said, Mr Blair talked of one thing while his party wanted the opposite. "Blair talks about free markets. But Labour wants nationalisation and intervention. Blair talks about opportunity. And is very happy to use it for his own

family. What hypocrisy — his party still attacks parental choice in schools. Blair talks about parental responsibility. But Labour opposed our measures to make parents responsible for the crimes of their children. Blair talks about fair taxes. But Labour has always meant high taxes."

New Labour was the same as Old Labour — a party of the fringe and not the majority. It



Hanley: attack on loonies and luvvies

could never speak for the country as a whole.

Michael Heseltine, the President of the Board of Trade, joined the assault, ridiculing the attempts by Labour's public relations consultants to present Mr Blair as a "closet Tory" and claiming that there were deep differences between Mr Blair and John Prescott, his deputy leader, who still backed old-style socialism and the redistribution of power and wealth.

He called for the party to rally around the Prime Minister in the run-up to the general election. "I've heard it said that we need a period in opposition. I have been in opposition, not many of my colleagues have. There is absolutely nothing to be said for it," he said.

Mr Hanley strongly defended Cade Brown, chief executive of British Gas, against Mr Blair's attacks on his 75 per cent salary rise and his lucrative share options package.

"What kind of twisted, perverse set of priorities leads a public school-educated party

leader to savage the salary of a man who left state school at 16, joined a company, took up a pick and shovel and worked himself up to the top? The reality behind Labour's attitude is this: if you are a millionaire, you are the lowest form of vermin, to be hounded out of the country. Unless you are a millionaire who gives money to the Labour Party, in which case you are a wonderful person to be feted and celebrated."

The Tory chairman also derided Mr Prescott and Robin Cook as he invited his audience to contemplate briefly the "nightmare" world of a future Labour Government. Mr Cook would be hobnobbing as Labour's Foreign Secretary with Fidel Castro. Mr Prescott would prove a surly National Heritage Secretary — arriving late for Cabinet meetings, insulting his driver and "demonstrating his commitment to our historic national culture by pouring out a stream of well-preserved Anglo-Saxon words."

Leading article, page 17



Heseltine: ridiculed attempts to portray Blair as a "closet Tory"

Heseltine attacks 'death-wish whingers'

By A STAFF REPORTER

DEATH-wish Tories should stop whingeing and start fighting for victory at the next election, Michael Heseltine said yesterday. The President of the Board of Trade brushed aside defeatist talk about the Tories needing a period in opposition as he rallied the faithful in Birmingham to reverse the huge Labour lead in the polls.

In a hard-hitting speech to the Conservative Central Council, Mr Heseltine said the task for Conservatives was to find in themselves "that inner strength, that faith to articulate what every day becomes more self-evident — that we have to put this country's economy upon a path that is the envy of the world."

Britain had led the world in a revolution that had seen a wholesale shake-up or sell-off of state industries and revitalised private sectors across the world. The Tories had not been afraid to take tough decisions and the country was now reaping the benefits.

Party plans to tighten grip on associations

By OUR CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Conservative Party took the first step yesterday towards an overhaul of the party machine aimed at giving Central Office more power over local associations.

The proposal cleared its first hurdle yesterday when a debate on controversial items such as centralising fundraising and membership records passed without provoking a grassroots uprising.

Sir Basil Feldman, chairman of the National Union Executive Committee, indicated afterwards that the party structure should not be reviewed until after the next election. The next two years should not be wasted on "navel" gazing, he said. The party had to concentrate on getting more activists and selling the Government's policies on the doorstep.

The thing we have got to spend our time on in the next two years is not constitutional changes... we have time to look at that perhaps after we have won the next election."

Tory party leaders have become increasingly envious of the power Labour headquarters has over its local parties. Labour has gained an organisational head-start over the Tories by co-ordinating its response to constituency boundary changes, imposing candidates in by-elections and setting up a centralised computer record of party members.

Jeremy Hanley, the Tory party chairman, fears that at the next election Labour will be able to outstep the Conservatives for the first time. His internal forecasts suggest that Labour will have an election war chest of £15 million — much more than the Conservatives' £9 million.

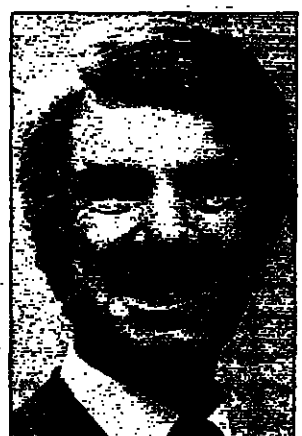
Yesterday Mr Hanley sought to dispel some of the gloom in party ranks by dismissing as "rubbish" press reports that the Conservatives were facing a financial crisis. Contributions from local parties and business donors were up in the past year and for the second year running Central Office had recorded a surplus, which would help to offset its £15 million overdraft.

Local Tory associations are jealous of their independence and would fiercely resist any

attempt to give headquarters sweeping control over their money, assets and membership records. Senior activists attending the Conservative Central Council meeting in Birmingham said privately that it was pie in the sky for the party leadership to think that they might agree to compromise their independence.

In a mark of the sensitivity of the issue, a 40-minute debate behind closed doors yesterday at the meeting was billed as a discussion and no vote was taken. Three of the ten speakers openly backed the move as long as it was linked to injecting greater democracy into the Tory party's internal structure.

John Stratford from Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, said that while Labour and Liberal Democrat party chiefs could communicate with their members in 24 hours, the Tories could not manage it in



Sir Basil: no time to waste

a month. Eric Chalker from Beckenham, southeast London, said: "The party is in deep trouble. We have to look at the party as a whole, not when it's in a hole and certainly not when it's in a bottomless pit."

Elgar Jenkins from Bath called for regional grouping of agents to help constituencies without the money to employ one of their own. He backed a central database to improve communication.

Michael Pinto-Duschinsky, page 16

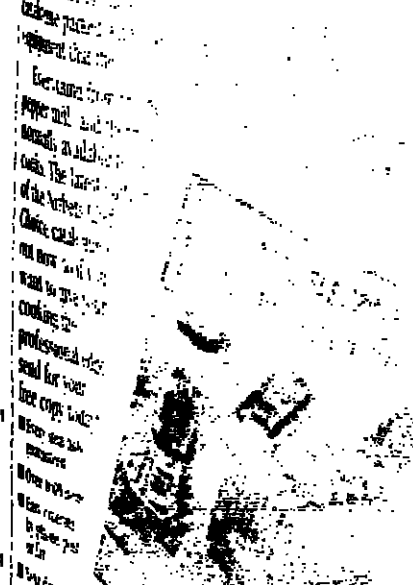
Howard tells parents to turn off the television



John Major

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مکان العمل

Home Secretary condemns the bad influence of programmes on children

Howard tells parents to turn off the television

By NICHOLAS WOOD, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

PARENTS should turn off the television if they are worried about its influence on their children, Michael Howard said yesterday as he stepped up his efforts to restore the reputation of the Conservatives as the party of law and order.

The Home Secretary delivered his no-nonsense piece of advice as he commended himself to rooting out "soft-headed" ideas about crime and punishment. The Conservatives wanted to create a "neighbourly society" in which people thought of others as well as themselves and did not walk by on the other side. Such attitudes did not

exist effective. There's no known defence against it. It's called the off-switch. My advice to parents is simple: As the electricity companies say in their adverts, "You've got the power. Use it. Use it. Use it."

Mr Howard countered Labour's claims that the free-wheeling 1960s had produced a selfish, thoughtless society. He pointed out that during that decade the number of people giving their time to voluntary work had risen 15 per cent to a total of 17 million. He was determined to expand this army of people prepared to "help others, lend a hand, create the neighbourly society". The new "Make a Difference" campaign would soon be encouraging more people to act as good neighbours.

The Home Secretary also promised to forge ahead with his law-and-order crusade. "I have been bitterly attacked by the politically correct brigade who don't believe in punishment. I have not the slightest intention of backing down. We must never forget the central principle that individuals are responsible for their own actions. There has been much talk about the causes of crime. We must do all we can to find and deal with them. But if you ask victims, they will tell you the cause of crime in one word. Criminals. I want criminals properly punished."

Action had been taken to restrict the use of cautions for young troublemakers, to make hard physical work part of community sentences and to make strict discipline a watchword in the new secure training centres planned for young offenders.

Mr Howard added that he would never give in to an ever rising tide of crime, but claimed that the tide was beginning to turn.

"The police have had some real successes over the last year," he said. "The biggest drop in recorded crime for 40 years. Fewer burglaries. A drop in car crime. They've been taking the initiative. Taking the fight to the criminal. I want to see us all playing our part. Teaching our youngsters right from wrong. Helping the police. Giving evidence to the courts. But I want more than that. I want a positive crusade to build a society of good neighbours."



Howard: children must be taught respect

spring out of this air. They needed to be nurtured in strong and caring families in which children received love, guidance and discipline.

Children had to be taught respect for their parents, for others and for the community, and if parents felt their efforts were being undermined by what their children saw on the screen, they had an instant remedy to hand.

"Many parents complained bitterly about the bad influence of television programmes on their children," Mr Howard told the Conservative Central Council meeting in Birmingham. "Sometimes they are right. But they should never forget one simple point. Parents all over the country have a fearsome weapon in their hands. Guaranteed to strike terror into the heart of every child. One hundred per



John Major, with an apparent disregard for the Home Secretary's suspicions of the harmful effects of television, found time yesterday to share intimate details of his personal life with Anne Diamond, Nick Ross and their estimated one million viewers. During his appearance on BBC's *Good Morning with Anne and Nick*, the Prime Minister disclosed that politics was rarely on the agenda when he was at home and

Prime time with Anne and Nick

insisted that media criticism no longer got him down. Offering a rare glimpse into his private life, he spoke of the importance of his home and family in helping him shut the door on the

controversies of politics. The Prime Minister, doing his propaganda offensive no harm by adroitly finding time to appear on a show watched by 40 per cent of the breakfast television audience, spoke of his confidence of leading the Conservatives into the next election. Politics was a tough trade, he said, but it was rewarding. His wife Norma, he confided, was not instinctively a political animal. "We do not talk politics."

Hurd refuses to countenance shoddy diplomacy

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

DOUGLAS HURD yesterday fired a warning shot at the Treasury, vowing to protect Britain's diplomatic missions overseas. The Foreign Secretary appeared to be responding to hints that Jonathan Aitken, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, would be seeking cutbacks in the diplomatic budget.

Mr Aitken is reported to be concerned that of the £1.3 billion spent on Britain's embassies, less than £100 million goes on the direct promotion of export and trade. But Mr Hurd, speaking at a dinner in Birmingham last night, said that he did not intend Britain to be represented in a "shoddy or second-rate way".

Countries all over the world, he said, wanted what Britain had to offer and they wanted international organisations such as NATO and the UN to reflect British values and policies. "British assets, old and new, are back in demand — much more than we give ourselves credit for," he said.

The diplomatic service was one of the assets which the Government was constantly



Hurd: no retreat

trying to keep up-to-date: "We have been cutting the tail to enhance the teeth. We have been exploiting new technology to cut back 500 jobs at home so that we can send 100 extra commercial officers overseas."

However, the Foreign Secretary said that modernising did not mean giving up the few historic buildings the country owned and retreating to suburban villas.

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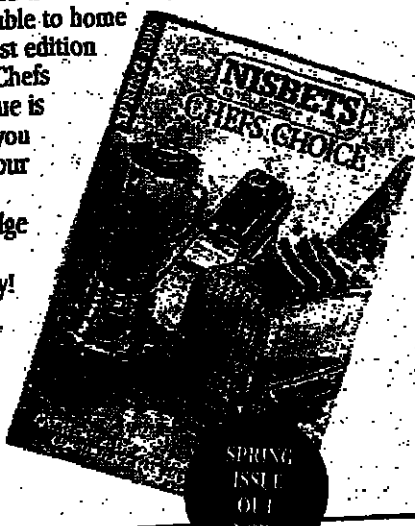
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Romanian witness tells of explosion before air crash

BY ANIANA AHUJA, BEN MONRO-DAVIES AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

ALL 59 people on board were killed when a Romanian airliner flying to Brussels crashed shortly after take-off from Bucharest yesterday.

Witnesses reported an explosion before the airliner plunged into a field near Balotesti, north of Bucharest. Later it was disclosed that the Brussels flight had been the target of a bomb threat a fortnight ago. Nothing was found on board the Boeing 737-400 operating the service on that day and it flew on to Belgium. Neither the police nor Tarom would speculate yesterday about a possible connection with yesterday's disaster.

The Airbus A310 of the Romanian state airline Tarom went down at 9.11am, local time, about a minute and a half after leaving Otopeni international airport. The

plane was carrying 49 passengers and ten crew. The airline said 32 of the victims were Belgians. There were thought not to be any Britons on board.

Tarom said nothing unusual was seen on radar before the crash and that pilot error and bad weather had been ruled out as possible causes, although it was snowing and raining at take-off. The airline said it was nevertheless grounding its two other Airbus planes pending an investigation. Shortly after the crash, police sealed Baneasa domestic airport in Bucharest after a bomb threat was received.

A railway worker told a local radio station that he saw an explosion from the aircraft before it hit the ground. "I was very afraid when I saw and heard an explosion in the air and I saw the plane flying too low with fire coming from the

back," Valentin Mocanu said. "There was a second explosion when the plane touched the ground."

Other witnesses reported seeing suitcases and bodies strewn over a huge scorched area in a deep crater. Vasile Alupei, a firefighter, said his crew battled in vain to put out the burning aircraft. "It was real carnage. We fought for an hour-and-a-half with the flames."

Those awaiting arrival of the flight at Brussels were not told until half an hour after it was due that it had crashed. They appear to have been alerted by the presence of reporters, who had earlier agreed not to reveal details of the crash before an official announcement was made.

Officials denied they had been slow to react. "As soon as we had confirmation we told



Officials of the Romanian Interior Ministry examine a mangled window section, one of the larger pieces of the crashed Airbus 310

people. We did what we could," Paul Uens of the Brussels Airport Transport Company, said. He added that it was usually the responsibility of the airline and not the airport authority to inform the

next of kin of an accident. Doctors, a psychologist and priests were brought in and a telephone line was set up. Patrick du Bois, a spokesman for Sabena, the Belgian national airline, said: "We are

trying to give as much help as possible to families and friends." A plane is being sent from Brussels to retrieve the bodies of the Belgian nationals who died in the crash. Airbus Industrie, the aircraft's maker,

said the crash was the third involving the A310 Airbus, which entered service in 1983. One crashed in Kathmandu, Nepal in 1992 in bad weather and a second in March 1994 on its way from

Moscow to Hong Kong. Tarom has been steadily upgrading its fleet since the fall of communism in 1989, adding modern Boeing 737 and Airbus aircraft to its fleet of mainly Soviet-era aircraft.

Birthday honours for Kohl, 65, have hint of a farewell

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

HELMUT KOHL can officially draw his pension from Monday when he celebrates his 65th birthday but, despite hopeful rumblings from the opposition, early retirement seems far from the German Chancellor's mind.

For days there has been a conspiratorial atmosphere in the Chancellery. A surprise party is to be sprung, a cake is being baked in conditions of open secrecy at the German leader's favourite Bonn confectioner, and opposition politicians are hoping the irony of congratulatory telegrams.

"It is a birthday like any other," claimed a Christian Democrat aide, but his comment was promptly belied by his party's proud publication of a 30-page collection of flattering, shrewdly edited tributes to the leader.

One Christian Democrat deputy, Dr Egon Klepsch, has come up with the idea of creating a German equivalent of the Mount Rushmore cliff carving. On a Saxon mountainside, the faces of Konrad Adenauer, Willy Brandt and Herr Kohl are to be hewn out by a sculptor.

Sixty-fifth birthday fanfares mark only the beginning of what seems set to be three years of tributes. Next year Herr Kohl will overtake Adenauer's 14-term record since German leader and publish-

ers are already cooking up celebratory volumes that will honour both men.

The Chancellor's promise that he will not stand again for election in 1998 has focused attention on his personality. Christian Democrats, in particular, are wondering what will happen to their party without Herr Kohl at the helm.

If a new candidate is to be built up in time for the 1998 election, then a crown prince will have to be found by 1997 at the latest. The favourite is Wolfgang Schauble, the parliamentary floor leader who has been confined to a wheelchair since a 1990 assassination attempt and recently emphasised his physical fitness for high office.

Even Herr Schauble admits that the best solution for the party would be if Herr Kohl simply went on and on. Certainly the German leader seems remarkably robust. After recent surgery on his knee, the Chancellor used a stick for only three days and then discarded it.

Herr Kohl, however, seems ready to honour his promise and depart the scene before the end of this legislature. Sometimes labelled a "Bismarck with a cardigan", the portly Herr Kohl may soon be reaching for his carpet slippers.



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Japan confronts wartime past to find future role

THE hit musical in Tokyo this spring is about the Marlene Dietrich of Japan, the 1930s actress and singer Ri Kuran, and is set during the brutal Japanese occupation of Manchuria. The aim is to use the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Pacific War to "hand down the truth to younger generations" about Japan's wartime atrocities in China and South East Asia. Over at the Diet, a parallel drama is being acted out over whether Japan should express — as Tomichi Murayama, the Socialist Prime Minister, puts it — "profound remorse" for the "unbearable suffering and sorrow" caused by Japan's wartime behaviour.

Japan is going through a period of intense soul searching. The old Cold War certainties no longer apply, and Japan has been cast adrift. According to Minoru Morita, a leading commentator, Japan's once confident demand for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council is losing momentum. "First we have to sort out our own society and politics — including coming to terms with the past," Mr Morita says. "We have to mature".

Japanese political life has

Richard Owen, Foreign Editor, reports from Tokyo on the many global and internal challenges facing Japan

been shaken into new patterns since the electoral defeat of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) two years ago, after nearly 40 years in power. Modern Japanese traits — conformity, company loyalty, lifetime employment — are being questioned. The Kobe earthquake, and the slow response to it, symbolised these seismic shifts. The nerve-gas attack on the Tokyo subway, and the link to an apocalyptic cult, have added to national unease.

For half a century Japan has forged ahead as an economic "Asian tiger", while avoiding the awkward question of national self-assertion. It has relied on the United States for strategic defence: the US-imposed post-war constitution renounces the use of force "forever", and forbids the build up of permanent armed forces. In reality, the "Self Defence Force" — now accepted as legitimate by the Left — has 250,000 men under arms, equipped with tanks, war-

ships, and fighters, and is developing theatre missile defences.

Japan has to face possible American disengagement, despite Pentagon assurances that the US-Japanese relationship remains the "linchpin" of American security policy in Asia. Japan faces a hostile North Korea and the fearsome might of China. "The Cold War is not over in the Korean peninsula," one senior official said. Japan is also sceptical of "reformist" Russia. Defence experts such as Professor Masashi Nishihara can even envisage a time when Japan might have to weigh the political cost of developing nuclear weapons to deter Peking or Pyongyang.

Less apocalyptically, Professor Nishihara suggests that Japan must develop political and military relationships with its Asian neighbours. It faces pressure from Malaysia to join an "all Asian" economic grouping, the East Asia Economic Caucus, which would exclude white nations such as Australia and New Zealand. Japan is tempted by this Asian option, while fearing it will be accused of abandoning the West in favour of authoritarian "Asian values".

The danger is that these challenges will develop faster than self-analysis. Senior officials see a link between Japan's domestic angst and its search for a world role. Japan has begun to take part in UN operations, but it is still constrained by its past militarism.

The search for an acceptable "apology" is therefore urgent. LDP rightwingers want only an anodyne "peace resolution", fearing an apology will reopen the issue of reparations. School textbooks are beginning to fill in the blank pages of history, but young Japanese still know little about the war. The exhibition at the Tokyo Museum is on the American bombing of Tokyo in 1945; it provides little explanation of what led up to it.



A UN buffer post between Croatian and Serb front lines near Gospic, in the Krajina enclave, where tensions grew as yesterday's deadline approached

UN scrambles to renew Croatia force

By OUR FOREIGN STAFF

FEVERISH efforts were underway at the United Nations yesterday to renew the peacekeeping mandate in Croatia before it expired at midnight last night, but the talks remained snagged on the politically-charged issue of a name.

Tension rose along UN-patrolled buffer zones between Croatian government and separatist Serb forces in the countdown to the deadline over the mandate for the 12,000 peacekeepers stationed in Croatia since 1992. The Croatian Government yesterday repeat-

ed threats to expel them this spring if "Croatia" did not appear in the title of a renewed, revamped UN mission demanded by Zagreb.

A draft UN Security Council resolution being debated yesterday in New York would change the Croatia mission's name to UN Confidence Restoration Operation (UNCRO).

In a last-minute scramble to overcome Zagreb's objections while not inflaming Croatia's secessionist Serbs in the Krajina region, Security Council members suggested the resolution fudge the question whether the letters "CRO"

referred to Confidence Restoration Operation or Croatia.

The debate was underway as British UN soldiers rescued the commander of the Croatian army and 20 of his men from a military convoy trapped in snowdrifts in a blizzard for around 12 hours. General Janko Bobetko, 76, a Second World War partisan fighter, and other men including the commander of the Bosnian Croat militia were stranded on a mountain road in western Bosnia.

Lieutenant-Colonel Barry Hawgood confirmed earlier reports that five of the Croat soldiers had been found dead.



Bobetko: partisan in the Second World War

Libya and Iran 'plan joint missile project'

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

WESTERN intelligence agencies suspect that Libya and Iran have agreed to co-operate in developing long-range ballistic missiles, following a visit to Tripoli by an Iranian Ministry of Defence delegation.

Libya, which is in the very early stages of developing a 600-mile-range ground-to-ground missile called al-Fatah, has been looking for a partner willing to provide missile technology in exchange for dollars. Now, after

long negotiations with Iran, it is believed that Tripoli has agreed to meet Tehran's demands for more than \$31 million (£20 million) in return for material and technological know-how which Iran has acquired from Western, North Korean and Chinese sources. This could include equipment for a liquid fuel plant.

Under the arrangement, it is believed that the two countries will work together to increase the range of the old Soviet-

made Scud B missile, as well as developing Libya's al-Fatah weapon system.

Martin Navias, an expert on the proliferation of ballistic missiles at the war studies department of King's College, London, said Libya would be highly vulnerable to a pre-emptive strike if it attempted to deploy missiles with a 600-mile range.

However, he said there had been co-operation in the past between Iran and Libya. Dur-

ing the Iran-Iraq War, there were allegations, he said, that Libya supplied missiles to Tehran in exchange for chemical weapons which were used by the Libyans against Chad.

Libya has been trying to develop a programme for the independent production of ground-to-ground missiles since the 1980s. Initially the project was based on equipment and know-how received from German companies. However, the boycott imposed

on Libya in 1991 after the Lockerbie bombing made it more difficult for these contacts to be maintained. So Tripoli switched its attention to Iran.

□ Tripoli: A Libyan newspaper has announced a \$4 billion reward for the capture of former US President Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, the former British Prime Minister, to face trial in Libya. It did not say who would put up the cash. (AFP)

Police step up hunt for sect leaders

Tokyo: Police yesterday renewed a nationwide hunt for the leaders of the extremist cult suspected of plotting mass murder on the Tokyo subway.

No one has been arrested yet directly in connection with the subway attack. But after Thursday's shooting of the national police chief, more followers of the Aum Shinri Kyo sect have been arrested. Takaji Kunimatsu, the head of the National Police Agency who was shot four times outside his condominium building, remained in a serious condition.

Police now know that he had been stalked for days by



Kunimatsu: condition remains serious

a man in a black coat and was shot by a gunman who fired with the precision of a professional hit man. Aum Shinri Kyo has denied involvement in the shooting and nerve gas attack on March 20, which killed 10 people and injured 5,500. (AP)



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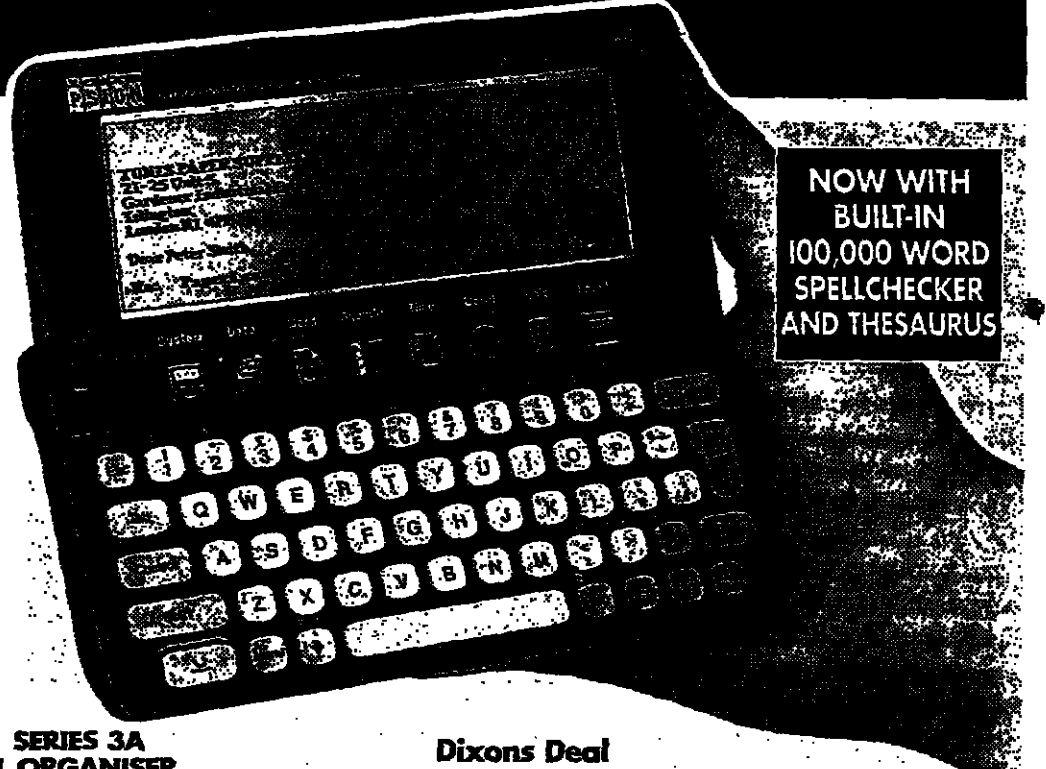
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THE TIMES SATURDAY APRIL 1 1995

Clinton calls on Haiti to reject politics of terror

FROM TOM RHODES IN PORT-AU-PRINCE

PRESIDENT CLINTON arrived in Haiti yesterday to confront an increasing tide of violence as he handed over American control of the country to the United Nations, amid allegations that the Haitian Interior Minister was involved in this week's assassination of an opponent of President Aristide.

The murder of Mireille Durocher Bertin, 38, chief of staff to the last military regime, who remained an outspoken critic of the Haitian President's return to power after American-led intervention last September, overshadowed Mr Clinton's attempts to claim Haiti as a triumph of foreign policy and sound ties between the two countries. It was claimed that Brigadier-General Mondesir Beaubrun, the Interior Minister, had masterminded the plot to kill Mrs Bertin in an attempt to undermine Mr Aristide and the US leader's tour.

Nevertheless, Mr Clinton wooed the crowds at the Presidential Palace yesterday. Standing on a podium next to Mr Aristide, and protected by

bullet-proof glass, Mr Clinton said: "Citizens of a free and democratic Haiti, *bonjour*." To even louder cheers, he added: "Today we celebrate the restoration of democracy to your country. Never again must it be stolen away."

Referring to the cycle of violence, Mr Clinton called for an end to the vigilante squads' reign of terror, declaring: "No to vengeance, no to violence, yes to reconciliation." Mr Clinton, only the second US



Bertin: her killing has highlighted tensions

President to visit this Caribbean nation — the first was Franklin Roosevelt after the American occupation in 1934 — had earlier embraced Mr Aristide on the tarmac of the airport. In the background, Air Force One dwarfed the runway in an imposing symbol of US domination in Haiti, as Mr Clinton himself loomed large above the diminutive former Roman Catholic priest. Later the two were joined by Boutros Boutros Ghali, the UN Secretary-General.

Then, Mr Clinton met American troops at their base in Camp Warrior, and was quick to commend the success of Operation Uphold Democracy and the US role in restoring Mr Aristide to power, three years after he was ousted by a military dictatorship.

"The men and women of our armed forces have helped give Haiti a second chance," he said. "Haiti is now democratic, free and more secure than ever before... now the Haitian people have moved from a dark night of fear to a new dawn of hope." Despite an enthusiastic greeting for the

American leader — from Mr Aristide, his own troops and from thousands of singing Haitians, who thronged the capital — many here believe the US mission has done little to improve the lot of the poorest country in the Western hemisphere.

US troops have built some roads and bridges, restored electricity to parts of the country and prevented the worst excesses of violence. But thousands of illegal arms still remain in the hands of those opposed to democracy. Murder and robbery, previously conducted under the mantle of government, are now the staple diet of clandestine gangs both in the cities and in the hinterland.

Aid workers and human rights groups believe the transfer of control from a dwindling US contingent to the UN force of 6,900 heralds a gradual decline in security and a return to the age-old culture of the gun. Nowhere has the political tension been more vividly displayed than in the killing of Mrs Bertin, a lawyer.



Nicholas Ingram, who faces execution next week, in his US army uniform

Prisoner challenges method of execution

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN NEW YORK

IN AN attempt to stave off his execution, the British-born man scheduled to die in the electric chair next Thursday, is suing the Georgia state executioner and other prison officials on the grounds that death by electrocution is a form of "cruel and unusual punishment" which should be banned.

Nicholas Ingram, 32, was convicted of murder in 1983 and has spent 12 years awaiting execution. The civil rights suit, due to be filed yesterday on his behalf, argues that death by electrocution is "barbaric" and inhumane, causing "torturous and lingering death" and "burning its victims to a crisp".

Georgia "intends to inflict upon Ingram a method of execution not even acceptable for euthanasia on animals... by violently and painfully burning him to death in the state's latter-day version of the stake", the suit alleges.

Condemned, Weekend, page 1

Webber admits box office tally 'inflated'

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN NEW YORK

SIR Andrew Lloyd Webber has admitted that the tally of ticket sales for the Broadway production of *Sunset Boulevard* was artificially inflated while Glenn Close, the star of the show, was on holiday.

The composer and producer described as "idiotic" the decision by Edgar Dobie, head of North American operations for his Really Useful Company, to misrepresent recent box office figures when ticket sales dropped.

Last week the show business newspaper *Variety* reported that the Really Useful Company claimed the show had grossed \$724,000 (£450,000) for the week ending March 12, one of two weeks when Close was replaced by an understudy, when the box office receipts were only \$569,000.

Mr Dobie issued a statement explaining that many tickets had been passed to various "worthy organisations" at a discount, but had been tallied at face value. He offered to resign over the incident. Rival Broadway producers say that the scandal indicates how heavily the

show relies on the star power of Close, who will leave the cast of *Sunset Boulevard* in July to be replaced by Betty Buckley, now starring in the London production.

The article in *Variety* implied that the inaccurate figures had been supplied by The Really Useful Company to give the impression that *Sunset Boulevard* could survive financially without Close.

"Edgar Dobie offered me his resignation in view of the huge embarrassment caused to me by something I knew absolutely nothing about," Sir Andrew said in a statement released on Thursday, adding that he had refused to accept Mr Dobie's resignation.

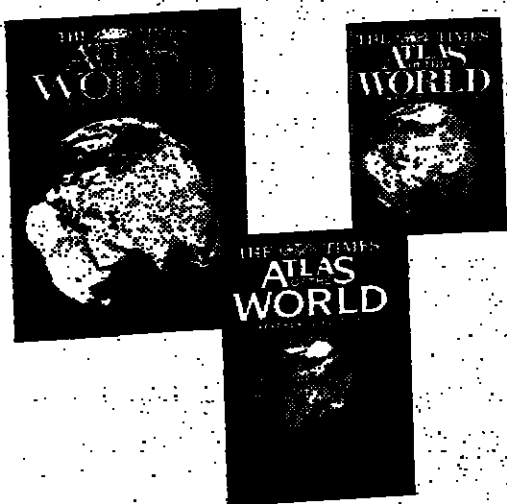
Sunset Boulevard opened in New York last November with the largest advance ticket sales in Broadway history, but running costs amount to some \$550,000 a week. The scandal over misrepresented box-office receipts has prompted speculation that the production may face serious problems when Close, who plays the ageing film star Norma Desmond, leaves the show for good.

THE TIMES

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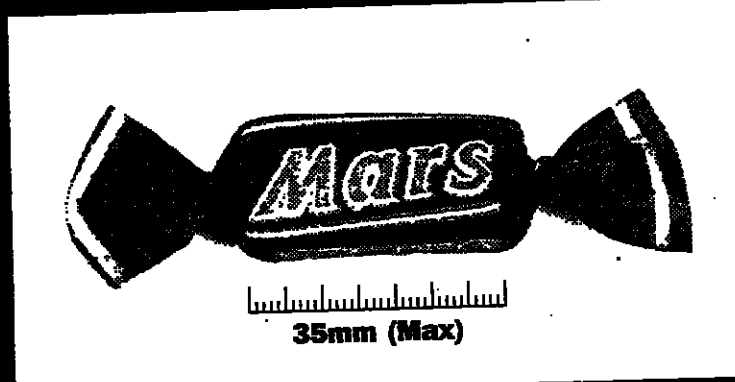
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Tanzania closes border to 100,000 Rwanda refugees

FROM SAM KILEY IN GASHOHO, EASTERN BURUNDI

UP TO 100,000 Rwandan refugees, haunted by fear after their part in the genocide of a million of their countrymen and fleeing Burundi, were stranded on the roadside yesterday after Tanzania closed its border and refused them sanctuary.

Officials from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) desperately tried to persuade the refugees to return to their camps and warned them that they faced "grave security problems" if they continued their journey.

The vanguard of a ten-mile column of refugees was stopped from moving beyond the hamlet of Gashoho, 30 miles from the border with Tanzania by Burundi soldiers. Gathered in a cold drizzle, they stood in silence as Tina Ghelli stood on the bonnet of a Jeep and begged them to return to the camps set up when they fled Rwanda last

year. "Please, please, we understand that you feel insecure in the camps. But you will not be able to go to Tanzania. Go back and we will study other alternatives," she yelled in a reedy voice, offering lorries to transport the refugees back.

But the Hutus, many of whom participated in the killing of Tutsis in their country last year, were gripped with fear after rumours that they may be attacked by Burundi's Tutsi-dominated army and tribal militias.

One refugee said: "We understand that the Tanzanians have closed the border. But why is the Burundi army keeping us here and not allowing us to cross into the next province?"

Miss Ghelli replied: "They fear having so many people in one place in their province." But her response spread a murmur of unease among the Hutus. "They are trying to trap us like animals," one

whispered. Mass movements of people in Central Africa are made of such whispers. The UNHCR quickly ordered lorries normally used to carry food to Gashoho to try to take the refugees to their abandoned and muddy camps. But yesterday afternoon there were no takers.

Last Sunday, 12 people were killed in a machinegun and grenade attack on the Majori camp, and it only took rumours of another strike at Magara camp, near Ngozi, to start the exodus.

As one aid worker monitoring the flood of people remarked: "These people know how easy it is to kill, and they are not taking any chances."

Aloise Nhamomo packed his few belongings, a pot, a grass mat, and his plastic sheet, and joined the throng leaving on the four-day trek from Ruvumba, ten miles east of Ngozi. "I would like to be able to walk the 25 kilometres (18



Hutus, fearful of being attacked by the Tutsi-dominated Burundian army, flee into the hills outside Bujumbura

miles) home to Rwanda. But it is not safe there. The Rwandan Patriotic Front harass Hutus, so we must go to Tanzania. The army is killing Hutus in the capital." More than 200,000 Rwandan Hutus

lived under blue plastic sheeting in northern Rwanda. Now about half are camped overnight in the rain, beside fires to cook the meagre rations they had saved for their march. A spokesman for the

UNHCR said that the first anniversary next week of the assassinations of the presidents of the two Central African states may have been a factor in the exodus. The agency urged Burundi to protect

the Hutu refugees, but at the same time appealed to Tanzania to keep its borders open. "The UNHCR is really dismayed by this new move," said Ron Redmond, its spokesman.

Colony accused over boat seizure

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

A DIPLOMATIC row between Peking and Hong Kong over China's seizure of two vessels and their two crew intensified yesterday when the colony's Legislative Council accused its Government of abandoning its citizens.

The Foreign Office summoned Ma Yinzhui, the Chinese Ambassador, to register its disapproval of the "forced detention of Hong Kong people and vessels".

Chinese security launches had intercepted a Hong Kong tug and a barge allegedly carrying smuggled cars on March 18. As they were towing the vessels and their two Hong Kong crew to a Chinese port, they were intercepted by two Hong Kong police launches. The police were allegedly threatened by the Chinese brandishing machineguns.

Despite reassurances by the Government that the issue has been raised at the highest level, members of the council accused it of "betraying the Hong Kong people".

Drought forces up Australia wine cost

FROM ROGER MAYNARD IN SYDNEY

THE Australian wine harvest is in, the grapes have been picked and the vines which last year produced 550 million litres of some of the world's most palatable drinking await the pruner.

But this year there is little cause for a celebratory tipple. The Australian wine industry, which has done so much to delight British drinkers, is facing its biggest crisis in a decade. It started with the worst drought in living memory, which caused an acute grape shortage, and was quickly followed by the threat of higher taxes. The Keating administration is considering lifting excise rates on all wines, regardless of whether it is destined for the home or overseas markets.

The higher cost of fruit is expected to mean a 10-15 per cent rise in bottle price over the next two years. The increase will be felt in Britain, which last year consumed 50 million litres of Australian wine worth £87 million. The good news, however, is that the drought, which only began to break in February, is expected to produce some wines of exceptional quality.

Koreans cash in on opium culture

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN SEOUL

NORTH KOREA is encouraging farmers in mountainous regions to grow opium to raise state funds, a defector from the impoverished and isolated communist country said yesterday.

Pak Chul Man, 28, added that many North Koreans have become addicted to the drug they harvest. South Korean intelligence officials have said that North Korean authorities are widely involved in opium, heroin and other drug trafficking in China and Russia. "Sometimes, villages become addicted to opium," Mr Pak said. "Because they have no medicine, sick children are given opium. Of course, they become even sicker."

Mr Pak, a supervisor, defected with five other North Koreans after swimming across a river bordering China.

Last year, two North Koreans were caught by Russian agents while attempting to sell almost 19lb of heroin for \$150,000. Suspicion of government involvement was raised when the two North Koreans were found to be members of the secret police.

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Whither the Tories' grass roots?

Don't neglect the constituencies, says Michael Pinto-Duschinsky

AMID the almost weekly dramas in the House of Commons, it is tempting for the Prime Minister and his embattled colleagues to ignore the mundane job of improving organisation and membership in the Conservative constituency associations. Yet the result of the next general election and the very survival of the Conservatives as a significant political force will depend almost as much on the state of the local parties as on events at Westminster.

The Government's unpopularity is only one reason for the Tories' current organisational woes. The problem is deeper. Amid political triumph and adversity, the atrophy of the party organisation has continued for the past 15 years.

The disadvantages are beginning to show. In the 1950s — when Conservative associations had five or six times as many members as today — local parties were solid bodies which could usually be relied upon to elect MPs who would support the party line. Many constituency organisations are now controlled by small groups of activists, making it easier for maverick Tory MPs to keep their support. For example, only one of the eight Euro-rebels, John Wilkinson, appears to have encountered serious trouble from his local party association of Ruislip Northwood.

Despite the assumption that modern election campaigns are a battle of television images and soundbites, local campaigning continues to be significant. Doorstep canvassing, posters, postal votes, leaflets and local issues can still determine the outcome in marginal constituencies.

As the Tories start the fourth year of the current Parliament, the number of qualified constituency agents is currently 214 (marginally higher than last autumn but still near a record low). A considerable number of marginals are still without an agent, though Central Office is committed to spending £1.5 million on aid to such seats. The membership campaign announced at last October's party conference is still in its initial stages.

Given the poor state of the local parties today, the Conservatives have little prospect of rebuilding them by the time of the next general election unless the Prime Minister gives it a high and immediate priority. Nor will it be enough to leave the projected membership campaign to Conservative Central Office, which tends to operate like a forgotten army during periods of Tory government.

The Conservative leaders have much to learn from the Republican Party in America in matters of organisation (though they would be ill-advised to copy US new-

Right ideologies). By direct-mail fundraising, the Republicans raised some £60 million in 1991-92. At the same time, during the run-up to the British general election, the Tories almost completely omitted direct-mail appeals for small and medium-sized donations.

Since 1992, Conservative Central Office has used an ageing donor file to mount some weak direct-mail efforts. These have raised only modest sums. When expenses are taken into account, income has amounted to considerably less than £500,000.

The failure to develop direct-mail techniques has been accompanied by a broader failure to address the crisis of central party funding. The party leadership seems only dimly aware of what one strategist has called the "nightmare scenario" facing Central Office. In the financial year 1993-94, Central Office made a surplus of £21 million but this still left a deficit of £16.5 million. During the financial year just ended, the central party organisation has had to meet the costs of campaigning for the European parliamentary elections. Though income has been about the same as last year (about £14 million), spending has risen. Central Office is likely to break even and may make a small surplus.

This means that now, just as the forthcoming general election campaign is starting, the party is short of cash. The central establishment of the party will remain at 220 until the general election and there will be the usual inflow of temporary staff in the final year before it. The "nightmare scenario" for the Conservatives is that they will lose the election burdened by their existing debts. Then, under new political funding rules introduced by a Labour Government, they will find it impossible to clear them.

Despite this danger, Mr Major has been deterred by adverse publicity from taking an active part in the party's efforts to win donations. At least one young member of the Government has been reading *Dangerfield's study of The Strange Death of Liberal England* — the sudden Liberal fall after its victories in 1906 and 1910: "Could we be facing the Strange Death of Conservative England?" he wonders.

As Mr Major prepares for the Tories' Central Council meeting in Birmingham, he might ask himself the same question. The Conservative leaders have much to learn from the Republican Party in America in matters of organisation (though they would be ill-advised to copy US new-

'Smith Square is more than £16 million in the red'



Adrift in a web of words

Cyberspace is vast and daunting, but its raw material is its saving grace

I have just plugged into the world. I have taken the Coleridge shilling to Xanadu. I have crossed the sacred river and entered caverns measureless to man. I have seen the damsel with the dulcimer and she gave me the fruit of the tree of knowledge. But it was no tree. It was the planet earth. Tree and planet are one. The world is that of cyberspace.

This and much more nonsense came to mind as I sat this week in a café across the road from Harvard Square in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The café contains a normal bar, a coffee machine, a bookstall and young waiters in grey T-shirts. On the table in front of me is not a knife, fork and spoon but a colour screen, keyboard and mousepad. The waiter brings refreshments. But drinks are not the point, nor is there much room for them on the table. For this is CyberCafé. I am among the technosmiths of cyberspace. I have come, for the cost of a cup of coffee plus \$5, to "surf the Web".

Off we go. We start with the home page, a domestic solar system of coloured planets with access to such mundane data as the menu or what's on in Boston. We soon leave that far behind. We click into the superhighway known as the World Wide Web, now known as the "honest thing in cyberspace". Suddenly we are far from Harvard Square, cruising past the news headlines, the latest movie clips and the sound of the Clintons' cat meowing. We are out into a realm of total information and interaction.

With the aid of Web browsers of astonishing power we surf the hyperlinks, leaping across continents from the Book of Kells in full colour to a CIA Africa report to an on-going debate on symbolism in Woody Allen's movies. The World Wide Web is the black hole of the Internet. Into it infinite quantities of information are daily sucked and their mass compressed a trillion times.

We follow them mesmerised, like Bilbo Baggins attended by tribes of Hobbits to guide us on our way. These denizens of cyberspace are variously named fingers, Veronicas, newsgazers, navigators or the great Web browser of them all, Mosaic. Each is blessed with its own Secret of the Web — and each invented by a tyecon of the Web cloned to Microsoft's Bill Gates. It can call up a picture, a video, a speech, a conversation. It can click into a world of coded

hypertext and veer off into a byway populated by thousands of new "Web servers", companies and individuals with their own "sites", waiting silently for our call. It can introduce me to more than 10,000 "meet and greet" newsgroups, or discussions, each engaged in an on-line debate about the latest treatment for diabetes or the love life of a pop star. Or I can turn to the friendly gophers. These animals surf the net like Ariel in a fraction of a nanosecond, bringing back from the frontiers of gopherspace news of the Australian traffic laws or recipes for pizza or

scope and the entire output of the Oregon Congress. Like many information innovations — not least newspapers — the Web gained its first impetus as a boon to student radicalism: "clever postgrads with too much time on their hands" sneer the cult magazines. It is currently being used to arouse left-wing opposition to the Republican "Contract with America". Some 700 campus subscribers are using on-line discussion groups to project messages down the highways. But the rest of the argument can do the same. Legal action can be summoned up, processed and dispatched by e-mail. Its gophers racing back and forth gathering documents and minimising error. One day real time voting on congressional bills may be possible. Who needs elected representatives when the people vote for themselves?

The Internet could perfect all markets: political, academic, commercial. Selling is transformed. Where is the world's cheapest VCR or Toyota or plane ticket or hernia operation, to be ordered at the click of a mouse? Morning-after contraceptive advice is available worldwide on the Web via its own "http://" prefix, complete with lists of co-operative doctors. A deaf person wanting the latest research, or to talk with other deaf people worldwide, can access the relevant newsgroup. Cancer patients can exchange symptoms — and find doctors interrupting them with advice and warning.

The horrors of all this are much-rehearsed: e-mail addresses pestered with sex fiends, paedophiles using newsgroups to entice children, racists, quack doctors and shady stockbrokers all are part of the demonology of cyberspace. Much Web activity is for lost souls, for addicts, alcoholics and the lonely. There is even a newsgroup for those addicted to the Internet. Though corporate "sites" build complex "firewalls" to block hackers, the system is not for secrets. The essence

of the Web is its openness. The hyperbole of enthusiasts is true. As PC Magazine says: "There is no one to stop you, no one to second-guess you, no one to censor you or interfere with your ability to reach out and touch millions of like-minded citizens of the net." Censorship has to take place in the home by the user, and nowhere else. I must confess to having been awestruck. For all the games, the dross and the junk, the information suddenly available over a simple cup of coffee is staggering. I could summon up not just Dante's *Divine Comedy* but every known critical commentary on it. Of course such devastating overload can crush the imagination. Random bursts of facts can swamp reflective judgment. The G-forces of the cybercruiser can wipe the mind clean of wisdom and render us bemused zombies. But I refuse to be Russian deploring the train or Carlyle the photograph. If an African doctor can save a life by cruising the Tropical Diseases Library in Boston through the HealthNet the revolution gets my vote.

Simon Jenkins

Cyberspace has no nervous system. It is communication beyond governments and beyond control. It is pure electronic language, freed from the human frame or the boundaries of nations. Yet it is inanimate, serendipitous, unlike the telephone. It can go where no phone could go, deep into the files of Nasa or out to the corners of the globe, searching out information beyond the inhibitions of human custodians: "Who are you and why do you want to know?" Hence its nickname, the Great Equaliser.

Yet the most uplifting aspect of this proxy space travel is the medium. Its raw material is good old-fashioned words, words hacked by the human brain into grammatical sentences. Internet has its jargon, its codes and protocols. Whole chapters of its manuals are incomprehensible. But at its heart lies the urge to exchange not spoken but written English. After decades of hearing that the written word is dead, I find letters, founts, grammar and imagery placed in sequence after the manner of Caxton and Gutenberg. The surfer must know how to write. The printed word is revived as vehicle for the ultimate exercise in human communication. The world is sending itself letters again.

The end of Oxford as we know it

Robert Stevens fears the demise of the college tutorial

Oxford, being a narcissistic university, enjoys the interest that the press takes in it. However, important change in Oxford — in some ways since the momentous Royal Commission in the 1870s — has significantly gone unreported, outside *The Times*.

This is in some ways understandable. One suspects many of those within the university do not understand the long-term importance of the vote last week on the so-called promotions document. It all sounds so innocuous. Some of its proponents, however, are now privately boasting that it is the beginning of the end of Oxford as an undergraduate institution. As news, that may be quite significant.

No doubt the national interest may be served by the demise of Oxford as an undergraduate institution. After all, it will make significantly more attractive the undergraduate programmes at many of the other well-established universities and a better balance between Oxbridge and those universities may well be desirable from the national point of view. In Oxford the decline of undergraduate studies will enable more resources to be pumped into research; and the Government seems to think untold research is a "good" at the moment. It does, however, seem a great pity that Oxford's change of course was accomplished so silently.

What then happened? The promotions document looks to be a modest proposal that the career grade at Oxford should now be either the readership or the professorship. The proposal also calls for the maintenance of the same amount of college teaching as at the moment. The changes in title are justified on the grounds that Oxford will now get even more research money because dons will be able to wave around their readership or professorship and, importantly, insecure dons who go off to conferences will be able to use their professorship title. At a more serious level it may just enable Oxford to resist raids by other universities offering chairs.

The long-term impact, however, is very different. When one stops to think that 80 per cent of Oxford's dons will at some point become readers or professors, it means that at most 20 per cent will see their bases primarily in the colleges. From a selfish point of view, one is entitled to be concerned about who will man the colleges. Who would be a senior tutor, who would be a dean, who would be a bursar? Only the failures? All decisions on tenure and promotions will now be focused on departments. Thus the professional life of dons will focus around the departments.

It is true that the rules for promotion will purport to take teaching into account. Sadly, the efforts to evaluate teaching in any scientific way are at best hazardous and at worst counter-productive. Oxford proponents understand full well that within the decade it is the pile of publications and not commitment to teaching in the colleges will be forced to commit themselves to a life outside the mainstream of Oxford.

The official answer to this is that of course there is a commitment to maintaining the level of teaching in colleges in the promotion document. The truth is, the proposed system cannot survive more than three to five years. While an increasing number of fellows will have their title of professor or reader, they will have a salary that is not comparable with "real" professors or readers. Much more importantly, however, they will have a teaching load which may be significantly higher. There will have to be a reshuffling of the pack and all those who have the titles of reader and professor will either cease to engage in college teaching or be substantially "released" from it. College teaching is demanding, but if it stuns goes with the professorship or the readership and a less demanding teaching life, dons are human enough to remove themselves from the heavy college responsibilities and from undergraduate teaching and to put themselves on the professorship/readership track.

The change is not all bad; it may be good for other universities, it may help the taxpayer since, surely, Oxford cannot justify the college fees (which the individual colleges receive for supporting the tutorial system) with the implications of this change of direction. The sad thing is that Oxford will be destined to be an American-type research university, with undergraduate teaching done primarily by graduate students.

The particularly sad thing is, however, with England's relative decline economically, Oxford cannot hope to compete with the best American and continental research universities. Oxford will thus not only lose its reputation for having trained the nation's leaders, but its international reputation of being a fine research university with an unparalleled commitment to teaching may well evaporate.

Robert Stevens is Master of Pembroke College, Oxford

Peerless pigs

A DESPERATE squeal has gone out from pig fanciers for patronage. Fine swine are slipping down the social scale and there are fears that breeds will die out for lack of aristocratic support.

This month's issue of *The Ark*, the bible for breeders of rare farm animals, warns that the landed gentry have turned their backs on pedigree pigs of old. "Once there was a strong link between the aristocracy and swine," it snuffles. "That link has now been stretched to near breaking point."

Valiantly holding the fort are such aficionados as Lord Lichfield, the Duchess of Devonshire and Lord Runcie, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, all of whom own pigs. But the numbers are still dwindling, warns Richard Lutwyche, secretary of the Society of Gloucestershire Old Spots, a breed which holds court at Gatcombe Park, the home of the Princess Royal.

In his article, Lutwyche cites P.G. Wodehouse's pig, Empress of Blandings, and her devoted owner Lord Emsworth. "How valuable the Empress was in supplying comfort and succour in hours of need," he says.

He adds that the difficulties faced by some members of the Royal Family could be directly linked to their interest in pigs. "That the Princess Royal attracts most esteem and least criticism can be credited to Her Royal Highness's sensible attitude in maintaining a small herd of Gloucestershire Old Spots," he



Wanted: aristocrats for pigs

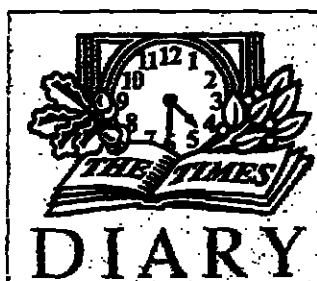
suggests that the Prince of Wales, rather than confessing to Jonathan Dimbleby, should have confided in pigs which "will take your confidences to the grave".

The Duchess of Devonshire seems only too agree. "It's too sad that their numbers are dwindling. They are by far the most attractive of farm animals. They really are very intelligent."

Blade runner

THERE IS a theory in the Oxford camp that the key to victory today in the 141st Boat Race lies not so much in the strokes of the oarsmen as in the quality of the coaches' launch that follows them. Three years ago, *Bosporos*, the launch that had followed the crew since 1948, was worn out and a temporary replacement was hired — since when Oxford have lost.

But now *Bosporos* is back and hopes are high. John Bockstoe, a former president of the boat club and one of the winners of the race in 1967, has coughed up £50,000 for a new fibreglass launch. "It's one of the fastest boats on the river," says Richard Fishlock of the Oxford University Boat Club. "But we've called it *Bosporos*, which is Greek for Oxford and the same as the old boat. We hope it will be a similarly lucky talisman."



With luck, the Queen will catch the Boat Race on television today — but no thanks to The Badminton Diary, which holds her Royal Warrant as well as that of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and the Prince and Princess of Wales. A misprint has the Boat Race today happening last week on March 25.

Hot stuff

AN UNUSUALLY relaxed Edwina Currie mingled with fellow MPs and peers at the Commons reception on Thursday night for the launch of EMI Records' *Great Parliamentary Speeches*, a splendid anthology of historical — and hysterical — exchanges. "I've just finished the first draft of my new book," chuckled the elegant MP. And the sequel to her best-seller, *A*

Parliamentary Affair, looks certain to steam up the spectacles of her older colleagues.

Her fictional MP, Elaine Stalker, who resembles La Currie in many respects, will, she tells me, be promoted to the post of Health Minister. But, like Currie, Stalker will eventually be forced to resign. Over doctory eggs? "Certainly not," huffed the real-life former health minister.

Right track

BRIAN MAWHINNEY may have exercised a curse when he arrived for dinner at York's National Railway Museum on Thursday night aboard a replica of George Stephenson's Rocket.

The Transport Secretary is the first minister to venture onto the famous engine since 1830, when the original collided with William Huskisson, an MP and former President of the Board of Trade, during its inaugural run. Huskisson lay in agony for nine hours before he died.

Model role

CLAD in the briefest of Dolce & Gabbana's slips on Thursday while attending the launch party for the designers' new Sloane



Street shop, the wafer-thin model Laura Bailey revealed the extent of Richard Gere's influence on her life.

"I want to be an actress," she said. "I'm off to New York for screen tests. But I don't want to play model parts — I'd even wear a bag over my head if need be." Instead, the Oxford don's daughter said she has her eyes on playing characters such as Tess of the *d'Urbervilles*. "And just by chance, I sat next to Roman Polanski at a dinner recently. But I'm not saying anything just yet."

P.H.S.

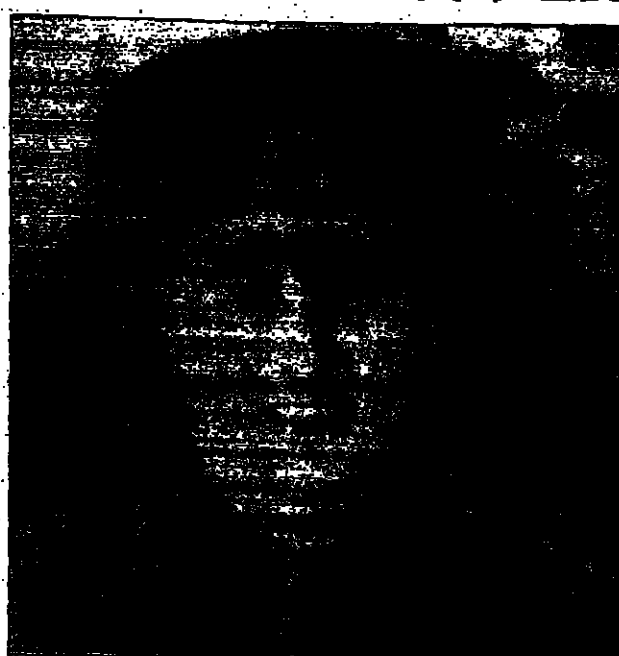
OBITUARIES

LIEUT-COLONEL MARCUS ERVINE-ANDREWS, VC

Lieutenant-Colonel Marcus Ervine-Andrews, VC, who won the decoration during the defence of the Dunkirk perimeter in June 1940, died on March 30 aged 83. He was born on July 29, 1911.

THE holder of one of the first two Victoria Crosses awarded to the Army in the Second World War, Marcus Ervine-Andrews won the highest decoration for valour during the last days at Dunkirk. It was at the most crucial juncture of the maintenance of the bridgehead against the German Army, vital if the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force and French units in the area was to continue to the end.

To ensure that the Germans did not break through this contracting perimeter and descend upon the exhausted and virtually defenceless troops waiting for rescue on the beaches, the defence of the line of the canal running from Veurne (known throughout the campaign by its French name, Furnes), just inside the Belgian frontier, to Bergues, a bar four miles inland from Dunkirk itself, was vital. On the night of May 31-June 1, 1940, Marcus Ervine-Andrews, then a lieutenant (acting captain), was commanding B Company of the 1st Battalion of the East Lancashire Regiment, which was holding a 1,000-yard sector of the canal against strong pressure from advanced units of the German 20th Motorised Division. The Germans attacked at dawn on June 1, and managed to cross the canal



thus threatening the flank of the battalion position.

Ervine-Andrews, with volunteers from his company, rushed across open ground to an old barn not far from the canal. Climbing on to its thatched roof, they directed rifle and light machinegun fire on the enemy, thwarting their efforts to cross. They continued to do this although the roof to which they clung continually had holes punched in it by German mortar bombs and by armour piercing rounds from heavy automatic weapons, which luckily went straight through the thatch without exploding. Ervine-Andrews personally killed 17 of his opponents with his own rifle and many more with a Bren gun. The combined fire of his small party

halted the attack for ten precious hours, enabling the rest of the battalion to withdraw and regroup on the Canal des Chais, halfway back to the coast.

Eventually, with ammunition exhausted, the barn shattered and burning, and still under fire, Ervine-Andrews managed to evacuate all his wounded and then slipped away with the eight survivors. Wading and swimming for over a mile with water up to their chins, he led them back to the beaches. There, they were taken off in small boats and embarked in the destroyer *Shikari* on the last of the organised evacuation run on June 3.

Ervine-Andrews's VC was the only one awarded for action in the Dunkirk perimeter.

ter: the other VC gazetted at the same time was that awarded posthumously to Lance-Corporal Harry Nicholls, Grenadier Guards, who had won it in the May fighting on the River Scheldt.

Son of C. C. Ervine-Andrews of New Ross, Wexford, Harold Marcus Ervine-Andrews was educated at Stonyhurst College and Sandhurst. He was commissioned into the East Lancashire Regiment in 1932, and served with its 2nd Battalion in Shanghai, Hong Kong and on the North West Frontier of India where he was attached to the RAF as an air liaison officer and was mentioned in dispatches. This early experience with the RAF was to influence the rest of his military career. He returned to join the 1st Battalion in 1939.

After Dunkirk, he was again attached to the RAF until he was seconded to the Australian Military Forces in 1941 and served initially in their Military Operations Directorate in Melbourne. After Pearl Harbor he was attached to the RAAF as Senior Instructor in Direct Air Support, and in 1943 he was promoted lieutenant-colonel as GSO 1 (Air) at HQ Allied Land Forces South-West Pacific Area. He returned to the 5th Battalion of his regiment in the autumn of 1943 before being given command of 61st Carrier-Borne Army Liaison Section. He ended the war back in the Far East as the Senior Air Liaison Officer to the 21st Aircraft Carrier Squadron in HMS *Royalist*.

period, before then turning to public relations, first in the Army Mobile Information Unit, and later as Assistant Director of Public Relations at HQ BAOR. He retired from the Army in 1952.

Ervine-Andrews was a very modest man, who genuinely cared for his men and wanted to share the credit for his VC with them. He always insisted that the fight on the Bergues-Veurne canal had been a company action, the success of which was due more to them than to himself. In a speech at his old school (whose pupils have won seven Victoria Crosses) he said: "Any little thing that I was able to achieve was only made possible by the support and bravery of the men with me." This was a self-effacing assessment of his conduct on that day, the truth probably being closer to what the citation for his VC said about the manner, namely that: "... his magnificent example imbued his own troops with the dauntless fighting spirit which he himself displayed".

He was essentially a countryman, who was a good shot and loved fishing and all field sports. He went into pig-breeding, and later reared ducks, ornamental pheasants and other species of wild fowl at his retirement home at Gorran in Cornwall, where he lived surrounded by nature.

Marcus Ervine-Andrews married, in 1939, Betty, daughter of R. I. Torrie and had a son and daughter. The marriage was dissolved in 1952 (she died in the 1970s) and he married, secondly, in 1981, Margaret Gregory. She and the children of his first marriage survive him.

THE VEN CHARLES HOOPER

The Venerable Charles Hooper, Archdeacon of Ipswich, 1963-76, died on March 22 aged 83. He was born on April 16, 1911.



CHARLES HOOPER burst into the diocesan scene, rather like Elijah of old, when in 1963 he was appointed Archdeacon of Ipswich. He was a dynamic figure - tall, well-built and having about him an air of both authority and dignity.

In his work among the parishes his quiet but firm and sensitive appraisal of difficult situations, frequently presented to archdeacons, quickly won him respect. In his parochial visitations there was never a sense of confrontation but always one of gentle inquiry. He was never overjoyed by church administration but faithfully attended all the sometimes boring and tiresome committee meetings associated with his office. His comment afterwards - often would be: "I expect the Church will carry on successfully despite all our endeavours" - a view which usually proved correct.

Charles German Hooper was the son of a solicitor. He won a scholarship to Lincoln College, Oxford, graduating with a second in English in 1932. He prepared for ordination at St Augustine's College, Canterbury, and after two years, spent as curate of Corsham in Wiltshire, left for South Africa where he served, again as a curate, in Claremont, Cape Province. He returned home in 1939 first to be priest-in-charge of two inner city parishes in Bristol and then to be rector of Castle Combe. In 1942 he enlisted as

an RAF chaplain and spent most of the remaining years of the war overseas, being mentioned in dispatches.

After the war he was rector of Sandy in Bedfordshire until 1953 and then vicar (and, within a year, rural dean) of Bishop's Stortford until 1963 when he left Hertfordshire for Suffolk, becoming Archdeacon of Ipswich and holding simultaneously the country parishes of Bideston and Watisham.

In 1967 he moved into Ipswich to be more accessible to the work of his archdeaconry. He was appointed rector of two parishes in the town centre, both of which were virtually redundant, their populations having moved out. Under his wise guidance they

were both finally closed in 1974, even if for some the ending was a little abrupt.

For his last two years as the bishop's eye on the diocese he served as priest-in-charge of two villages, while continuing to take a full part in the life of the town (he was chaplain of the Ipswich Licensed Vicar's Association and a popular after-dinner speaker).

After his retirement, which took place in 1976, he continued his ministry for as long as his health and age permitted. He was a good preacher, taking great pains to adjust his style to his congregation's needs - further proof of the pastoral care which characterised his approach.

He is survived by his wife and their son and daughter.

DR RONALD MURRAY

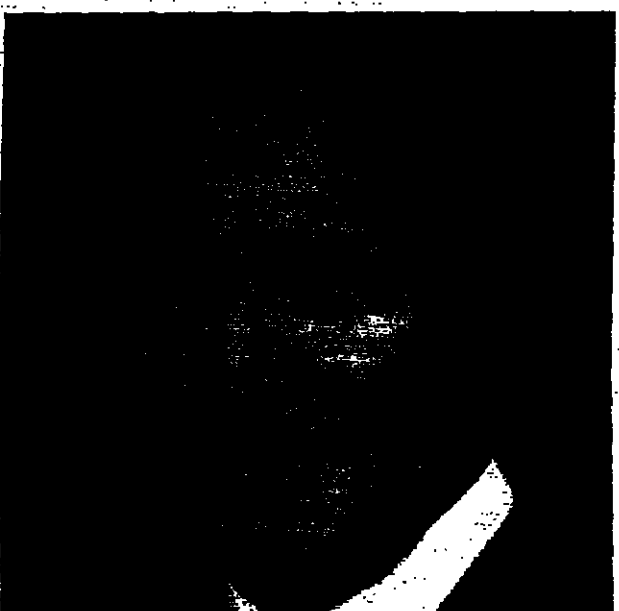
Dr Ronald Murray, MBE, clinical radiologist, died on March 5 aged 82. He was born on November 14, 1912.

FOR much of his working life Ronald Murray's name was synonymous with the practice of skeletal radiology in the United Kingdom. He was instrumental in promoting the speciality both nationally and internationally. He was for 21 years consultant radiologist to the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital in London and Stanmore, where his experience and love of teaching endeared him to successive generations of radiologists and orthopaedic surgeons in training. A founder of the International Skeletal Society, he achieved worldwide recognition of his talents in his chosen field.

Ronald Ormiston Murray was born in Glasgow, and educated at Glasgow Academy, Loreto School, St John's College, Cambridge, and St Thomas' Hospital Medical School.

His parents had died during his childhood and he was brought up by his older brothers. It was his eldest brother, a leading Scottish physician, who encouraged him to train in medicine.

A talented sportsman, he represented Cambridge at rugby football in 1934-35 and Scotland in 1935. In swimming also he represented his university and was a member of the British Universities team visiting Turin in 1935. Although he always remained a keen swimmer, his major sporting interest after university was golf, although he felt his talent



for the game left much to be desired.

After medical qualification, his house appointments at St Thomas' Hospital were cut short by the Second World War. He was commissioned in 1939 and served as medical officer to the 2nd Battalion, the London Scottish, and eventually as a lieutenant-colonel in command of No 130 Field Ambulance in 1945-46.

He took part in the Allied assaults on Sicily, Salerno, Anzio and Normandy. Later his unit was responsible for the rehabilitation of prisoners released from the Sandbostel concentration camp, an experience that he was never to forget. He was able to observe and report on the physical response of these starving prisoners to the administration of a high calorie diet. In 1945 he was appointed MBE

for his military service.

After the war Murray trained in radiology while simultaneously being involved in the postwar redevelopment of the Morland Clinics, later to become part of the NHS. The impetus to his interest in orthopaedic radiology began when he was appointed radiologist to Lord Mayor Treloar's Hospital, Alton, Hampshire.

In 1954 he was given leave of absence from the NHS to spend two years as Associate Professor of Radiology at the American University Hospital in Beirut, a post that provided him with unique experience. On his return, he was offered the post of consultant to the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital and was also appointed a senior lecturer in the Institute of Orthopaedics. He was, at the same time, consul-

tant radiologist to Lord Mayor Treloar's Hospital and Heatherwood Hospital, Ascot. It was his proud boast that his three appointments, comprising the work relating to some 600 orthopaedic beds, gave him the widest experience in skeletal radiology of anyone in the United Kingdom.

One of his major research interests was the effect of steroids on the skeleton and this work led to his being awarded an MD. It also resulted in an invitation to lecture in the United States, where a chance meeting with Professor Harold Jacobson resulted in a perhaps unlikely but close and enduring friendship.

At Murray's suggestion, together they broke new ground by persuading an at first reluctant publisher to accept the concept of a large book that combined a reference text with a quiz presentation, on the basis that learning should be both challenging and fun. A runaway success, this publication, *Radiology of Skeletal Disorders: exercises in diagnosis*, reached its third edition in 1990.

Together with Jack Edeiken, Murray and Jacobson founded the International Skeletal Society in 1972. A staunch supporter of the society, he was one of its early presidents and an editor of its journal.

Ronald Murray married Suzette (Susan) Gauvain, daughter of Sir Henry Gauvain in 1940. She died in 1980. He is survived by their son and two daughters, one of whom has followed him and her mother into medicine. In 1981 he married Jane Mathewson, who also survives him.

GROUP CAPTAIN FRANK WHITWORTH

Group Captain Frank Whitworth, QC, former Judge in the Courts of Appeal of Jersey and Guernsey, died on March 4 aged 84. He was born on May 13, 1910.

FRANK WHITWORTH once found himself the victim of a violent crime, but treated his assailants as if they were standing before him in the dock. It happened in the late 1980s when Whitworth and his wife were watching television. Just as Miss Marple was working out who had committed the crime, a trio of masked robbers burst in through the French windows, held the Whitworths up with a sawn-off shotgun and handcuffed them - with manacles apparently bought from a Soho sex shop. The raiders then ordered them to open up the house safe. But Whitworth, who thought it was all a practical joke, rebuffed them sternly for disrupting Agatha Christie's denouement, while his wife, who had no head for figures, could never remember the intricate combination of the safe.

The men were completely nonplussed by their reception. On being told that the gardener would be calling at any minute they fled empty handed across the lawn, initiating an intensive police manhunt throughout Surrey.

They might never have tried at all had they known Frank Whitworth's history. Despite having only one lung (the result of contracting TB some years before) he had fought his way into the RAF in the Second World War and risen to the rank of group captain in five years, working on the supply of new aircraft for Bomber Command.

He was born in Manchester, the only son of a prosperous businessman who owned warehouses in the city. Young Frank went to Shrewsbury School, then Trinity Hall, Cambridge, where he read classics and edited *Varsity*, the student newspaper.

Called to the Bar by Gray's Inn in 1934, he settled into a successful career as a London barrister, specialising in some extent in landlord and tenant litigation. He became head of his chambers in King's Bench Walk in the Temple, took silk in 1966 and was appointed an Appeal Court Judge in the Channel Islands in 1971, flying out to hear cases from time to time until his retirement in 1980 at the age of 70. He was also a Crown Court Recorder between 1972 and 1982, sitting mainly at Kingston upon Thames.

Whitworth was, however, a man of many parts. He fought St Helens for the Tories in the 1945 general election, losing to Hartley (now Lord) Shawcross in the Labour landslide. Despite being a staunch Conservative all his life, he once confessed to friends that, had he lived in



the conditions endured by many of his potential constituents, he would probably have ended up a Communist.

Although he did not try for Parliament again, he often spoke at political meetings in Surrey and also sat for many years on Dorling and Horley Rural District Council.

He was twice master of the Clockworkers' Company, in 1962 and 1971, and served as a trustee of the Whiteley Village Homes from 1963 until 1993. He also wrote and published articles and verse throughout much of his life. But his main recreation was given in *Who's Who* as farming. He did indeed own a small farm, which luncheon guests were frequently dragged around in wellington boots to inspect the cows. He always enjoyed referring to "we farmers" making it clear that he regarded mere gardening as women's work. But he also employed a staff to do the milking.

Only 5ft 5in tall, he was known locally as "The Judge" and was looked upon as something of a character. He drove

himself to the station in his Land Rover, the locals always giving him a wide berth, while at home he lived in considerable style, maintaining a housekeeper and a butler. He himself liked to wear a wing collar and clearly enjoyed the "Group Captain" prefix.

On the other hand, Whitworth was a very private person who managed to compartmentalise his life. However well colleagues might know him in one role, he told them little about his other interests. Many knew him but few knew him really well, failing to penetrate the twinkle in his eye.

Frank Whitworth was married twice. His first wife, Lucy, whom he met while at Cambridge, died in 1979 after suffering a long degenerative illness, through which he nursed her devotedly - often coming home from court in Kingston to get her lunch.

Then in 1980 he married a widow, Mrs Irene Lannon, who died four years ago. He had no children and is survived by cousins and a niece.

PERSONAL COLUMN

Services, WANTED, ANNOUNCEMENTS, HELPING HOUSE THE HOMELESS, CHURCH HOUSING TRUST, YOUR WILL, PARKINSON'S DISEASE CAN BE ANYBODY'S DISEASE, EX-SERVICES MENTAL WELFARE SOCIETY, COMBAT STRESS, ANIMALS IN NEED, LEUKAEMIA RESEARCH FUND, MAKE A LOT OF CHILDREN HAPPY, MAKE A WILL.

ART EXHIBITIONS, ON THIS DAY April 1 1895, truth and humour. For the rest we need not repeat the well-worn truisms as to the use and abuse of conventions and exaggeration in caricature.

SATURDAY APRIL 1 1995

MAGAZINE

WEEKEND

MOON TODAY

ORIENT-EXPRESS

TO CARIBBEAN

ORIENT-EXPRESS

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Bruce Rioch plots the downfall of Liverpool

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THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY APRIL 1 1995



Willie Phillips, the managing director of Macallan-Glenlivet, celebrates a rise in pre-tax profits from £5.7 million to £6.7 million during 1994. The total dividend from the whisky group rises from 1p to 1.26p out of earnings up from 3.62p to 4.12p. Sales rose from £15.5 million to £17.2 million

C&G members give clear vote for Lloyds takeover

By SARA MCCONNELL
MEMBERS of the Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society yesterday voted overwhelmingly in favour of the society's £1.8 billion takeover by Lloyds Bank, clearing the way for cash payments this summer of up to £13,500 for qualifying investors.

John Bays, the chairman, said: "The takeover, the chief executive, came under fierce attack - mainly from outside members, at a fractions and often ill-tempered meeting in London attended by 2,000 people.

members in their own right for two years. Only the first named on an account is regarded as a member.

Anthony Verdin, a borrower, said it was a "dereliction of duty on the part of the board not to discuss the issues". He added to applause from the audience: "The board is driven by personal ambition and gains which accrue to the board" and claimed Mr Longhurst was not fit to be an executive director.

Other members were angry that they lost out because they had transferred money from deposit accounts to share accounts near the beginning of 1993, on the society's suggestion, thus excluding them from bonuses because they had held share accounts for less than two years.

Qualifying balance	Fixed payment	Extra payment (13%)	Total
£	£	£	£
100	500	65	565
1,000	500	650	1,150
5,000	500	3,250	4,250
10,000	500	6,500	7,500
50,000	500	32,500	33,500
100,000	500	65,000	65,500

Who benefits: People who have held share account continuously since end-1992 or who held deposit accounts opened on, or before, March 31, 1994 qualify for the full £500, plus extra payout (expected to be 13 per cent). Those with less than £100 on the qualifying dates do not get the £500, but still get the 13 per cent. Under 18s who qualify get the same payout as adults. A statutory bonus, probably 8-9 per cent, is payable to non-qualifying minors and adults with balances below £100 at end-1994.

Who gets nothing: Borrowers; savers with £100-plus balances who have not held a share account continuously since end-1992; anyone who withdraws their money before completion date, July 31, 1995.

Comment, page 27

BUSINESS TODAY

FT-SE 100	3137.9	(-38.9)
Yield	4.34%	
FT-SE AAX share	1628.84	(-13.22)
Yield	7.77%	(-0.72%)
New York	4154.88	(-17.99)
Dow Jones	804.18	(-2.03%)
S&P Composite		

Federal Funds	8.50%	(0.00%)
Libor 3m	7.75%	(0.00%)
Yield	7.45%	(7.41%)
3-month Interbank	6.75%	(0.00%)
Life long rate	10.25%	(10.00%)
Future (Jun)		

New York	1.8250	(1.8250)
London	1.8250	(1.8250)
DM	2.2287	(2.2287)
FF	7.77%	(7.77%)
SP	1.8374	(1.8374)
Yen	140.72	(140.72)
S&P Index	85.2	(85.2)

London	1.3785	(1.4000)
DM	4.8900	(4.9100)
FF	1.1250	(1.1250)
SP	96.75	(96.00)
Yen	99.0	(99.0)
S&P Index		

Tokyo close Yen 86.37		
Brent 45-day (Jun)	\$17.25	(\$17.15)
London close	\$282.05	(\$283.25)
* denotes midday trading price		

Pep for bonds
The Island Revenue is to allow sterling Eurobonds to be included in corporate bond personal equity plans. The move boosts the amount of allowable bonds from £15 billion to £25 billion. Page 25

Water bid referred to MMC

By MARTIN WALLER
THE possible takeover bid for Northumbrian Water, worth £576 million at today's market price, from Lyonnaise des Eaux, of France, has been referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Ten NatWest Bank non-executives share £455,000

By PATRICIA TEHAN, BANKING CORRESPONDENT
NATIONAL Westminster Bank has revealed full details of non-executive directors' pay for the first time.

BNFL signs contract for £14bn

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT
NUCLEAR ELECTRIC, the atomic generator, is pressing ministers for a merger with Scottish Nuclear, its smaller, state-owned sister, as a prelude to privatisation.

Dollar upsets stock markets

By COLIN NARBROUGH
RENEWED dollar decline, combined with a sharp upward revision of American growth, upset the bond and stock markets on both sides of the Atlantic yesterday.

WEEKEND MONEY

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Anne Ashworth on new deals for borrowers

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Home loans for the self-employed. APR confusion

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TRADE INDEMNITY

Power struggle, page 23

REALLY USEFUL GROUP: Patrick McKenna and Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber

Composer in harmony with corporate captain

Half of the duo writes the notes, the other keeps them flowing into the coffers. Jon Ashworth reports

Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber sits on the sofa at his luxurious London home, bursting with ideas. About churches, and orchestras, and space-age cinemas with church organs rising out of the ground. About enormous theatre complexes in the Nevada desert, and about a glorious home for his works of art.

Over in the West End, the man who decides whether the ideas become reality is probably about to dash to the airport. Indeed, he may already be speeding across the Atlantic on Concorde, or on his way back from a meeting in Hong Kong. Such is the whirlwind life of Patrick McKenna, chairman and chief executive of The Really Useful Group.

Barely five years after turning its back on the stock market, Really Useful is poised for great things. Profits have soared by 800 per cent to £46 million, through the world's insatiable appetite for Andrew Lloyd Webber musicals. The company is venturing into film production, and tailor-made theatres, and records. It has launched a board games division, and is considering a stab at the Channel 5 television franchise.

All this is music. To the ears of Sir Andrew, who had given up on Really Useful by the late Eighties. Formed in 1977 to monitor the standards of his musicals around the world, the company went public a decade later in what proved to be a disastrous move. "It was an absolutely enormous, crashing mistake, because it didn't allow me to really carry off as a composer in the way that I would like to," says Sir Andrew, relaxing in his plush living room, overlooking Eaton Square. "I started to talk to the close friends I had around in the world of finance and said, look, what am I going to do?"

The story ended with Patrick, who had been involved with me for a long

time, really as my accountant, saying he felt it should be bought back. So I said, well this is all fine, but if we do that, I want to be left in a situation where I'm not going to have to be worried any more about business. I must be allowed to get on and compose. And that's exactly what we set out to do."

McKenna, who has looked after the composer's financial affairs since the late Seventies, became swept up in his own invention. As head of the media and entertainment group, at Tonche Ross, the accountancy firm, he dealt with tax matters on behalf of such stars as Annie Lennox, Cliff Richard, Phil Collins and Lord Olivier.

"I suggested that the only way he was going to have control over his own destiny was to buy back the shares held by the public," McKenna recalls. "He thought, you got me into this, you better come on board." The "marriage", so far, has proved resoundingly successful. Loss-making companies were sold and new management was brought in. Most of the staff at the head office in Tower Street, London, were fired, including Prince Edward, who was quietly ousted out with records group, later paid £80 million for a 30 per cent stake, more than covering the cost of the buy-back. Sir Andrew's contract was renegotiated, giving Really Useful the rights to his entire creative services to the year 2003, on top of the traditional income from royalties on his musicals. "We decided we wanted more of the pie," McKenna says. "That was my job, to put all the pieces together so that we could become an international production company."

Sir Andrew is only too happy with these arrangements. "Frankly, from the day that Patrick set foot in Tower Street, I have not even needed to have an office there," he says. "I don't interfere with the management at all, now. I suppose that, at the end of the day, I do have a right of veto over a very major project, but I very rarely use it."

This suits McKenna just fine. "Andrew has thoroughly enjoyed himself in the last few years because he doesn't really have anything to do with the business," he says. "I've never put him down as a good businessman. He's got a very good instinct for what works commercially, creating shows that have a very, very broad appeal."

The composer, at 47, appears to have entered a happy phase of his life. He has just completed the score to a film musical, *Whistle Down the Wind*, and is hugely excited

about the prospects. "We start with the challenge, in the cinema, that there has not been an original film musical for over 30 years, other than the Disney cartoons," he says. "It's done in the first stage and now needs its director. Musicals are hugely collaborative."

Sir Andrew is, of course, very rich, with an estimated £300 million fortune, but appears to have his feet on the ground. His home is steeped in the trappings of wealth — Pre-Raphaelites on the wall, and ornate sculptures — and yet there are glimpses of the person behind the tabloid face. Birthday cards cluster on a mantelpiece. Family photos fight for space in the corner. "The children are having a tea party," he whispers, peeping round the door into the kitchen, where Alastair,

three, and William, two, are tucking in.

There is an apartment in the Trump Towers, in New York, and also a country estate in Berkshire and a house in France, but the Lloyd Webbers are usually to be found in London. "Home has become very much Eaton Square now," he says. "We tend to be here most of the time. The house in the country is rather more where I keep the pictures and the collection and everything."

Sir Andrew's third wife, Madeline, is "a tremendous support", and, one suspects, offers him a healthy antidote to the cloying world of theatre. "I don't," he says, "have a whole kind of clique of showbusiness friends whom I talk endlessly, incestuously, with about

what's going on with musicals and say, 'On this is happening dear', and 'Darling, this is happening: I don't have that. It's not around me, and it never really has been. There are a lot of people that I like in the theatre, but I tend to find that it's best to listen to what other people have to say. You always get a much more honest answer."

McKenna is never one to mince his words. Born and raised in Essex, he lives in Brentwood with his wife, Margaret, and their three children (another is on the way). He is working out in the gym by 7am most weekdays, and is rarely home before midnight. Only 38, he is forever hopping on aircraft. So far this year, he has visited New York (twice), Sydney, Melbourne, Singapore, Tokyo, Los Angeles and Las Vegas,

and has squeezed in two weeks in Antigua. "It's a very punishing schedule, but we're looking to double the size of the company over the next five years, and that requires me to be hands-on," he says.

The key to future success lies in America, which already provides 45 per cent of Really Useful's income. There are plans to build a three-in-one theatre complex, dubbed "Theatreplex", in Las Vegas — one of Sir Andrew's current themes. "Madeleine and I went there to see *Starlight Express* and were quite staggered by the number of children that were there," he says. "It was fairly blindingly obvious to me that there is a need for a proper complex that is about musicals, and that it would do extremely well."

A new film production company, based in Los Angeles, has \$250 million in funding behind it, and is looking to make seven major films in the next few years, starting with *Whistle Down the Wind*. Revenue from purpose-built theatres in Switzerland and Germany will feed the Really Useful pot. "Certainly, I didn't foresee the length of the runs of these musicals," Sir Andrew says. "I think you would have thought two to three years was an extremely good run, certainly in the Seventies."

McKenna says that the pair "understand each other very well", adding: "We have our own shorthand. It definitely has its moments, but it works." They keep in touch by telephone and catch up every couple of weeks over lunch or dinner. "I can't create a show or write a piece of music," McKenna says. "He trusts my judgment on business issues." Sir Andrew agrees, saying: "The suitors come to me with their siren voices, and they go to Patrick with their rather more hardened voices. Finally, he will come back to me with what I know will be the best proposal."

The arrangement leaves the composer free to pursue interests such as making Britain's churches more accessible and encouraging young musicians. "There just hasn't been the new generation of people coming along in the way we would like to see," he says.

Sir Andrew talks of London's need for a new theatre for musicals, perhaps combined with a gallery for his art collection, and of screening a film version of *The Phantom of the Opera* in customised cinemas. He usually bows to McKenna's judgment. "He may come back to me and say, Andrew, your idea is a pipedream, we can't do it. That's kind of how we work."



Man of affairs and music man: Patrick McKenna and Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber "understand each other very well"

Ministers in power struggle over nuclear privatisation

Eager industry chiefs still face opposition, say Ross Tienman and Arthur Leathley

Britain's nuclear industry is being spring-cleaned for an early sale. Nuclear Electric yesterday signed a £14 billion contract with BNFL for the supply of fuel and reprocessing services until 2009. The Nuclear Installations Inspectorate will next week clear the 30-year-old Hinkley Point A Magnox plant to work for another decade, paving the way for further life extensions at two sister stations.

The combined effect of these measures will be to expel £7 billion of the £9 billion decommissioning cost of the first-generation Magnox plants, and at the same time increase their ability to generate cash to pay for the clean-up.

If the nuclear industry can succeed in minimising its financial risks in this way, its burning ambition, privatisation, may be achievable.

Some senior ministers

have already been won over by a lobbying campaign of extraordinary intensity. The Cabinet is debating the issue. John Major said last week: "The principal concern is the question of safety. Provided we are satisfied on that, we can look at the prospects of Nuclear Electric moving into the private sector."

Some ministers, however, are warning Mr Major that a nuclear industry privatisation could become an electoral disaster for the Tories. While Conservatives are anxious to press ahead with the £2 billion sale to generate funds for pre-election tax cuts, a report to Mr Major from the Department of Trade and Industry is expected to outline several areas of concern.

Ministers wary of an early

sale say that there is a significant risk of alienating the vociferous environmental lobby. They also fear that, with the sale of Railtrack planned for next year, there may be insufficient time to prepare the ground with investors.

"This must be a success in every way. We can't afford to slip up so close to an election," said one minister.

In spite of the present progress, an enormous amount of reorganisation has still to be done if Nuclear Electric is to be offered for sale in spring or autumn 1996. "This is not just a one-day bonanza," said the minister. "Investors want to know that the long-term costs and effects have been thoroughly thought through."

Michael Heseltine, still

smarting from his failure to sell the Post Office, is urging a "softly-softly" approach. Colleagues suggest he is prepared to support the sale only if he is given assurances about how Magnox decommissioning costs will be met.

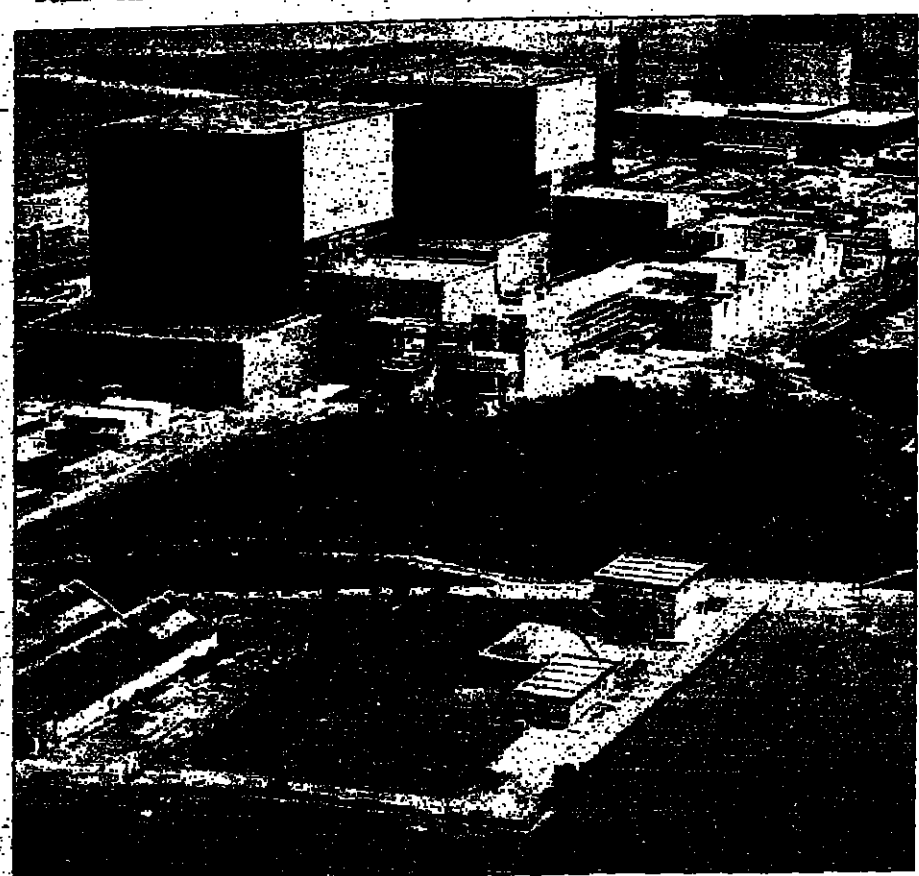
No one pretends that private investors can be persuaded to buy the Magnox stations. Three have already been closed. Nuclear Electric, the largest state reactor company, has six more, designed to last 25 years.

Bradwell in Essex has already received consent to run for 40 years, subject to annual safety checks. Hinkley Point A in Somerset, which celebrated its 30th anniversary of operation yesterday, is about to receive a ten-year extension. Similar consents will be sought for Dungeness B and Sizewell A, now nearly 30.

Because available costs are low, every extra year of operation by these three generates a torrent of cash. But even by projecting an average 37-year life for the Magnox stations, Nuclear Electric calculates a shortfall of up to £2.4 billion if the £9 billion of fuel reprocessing and closures costs are to be met.

The company's response is to propose splitting off the Magnox stations, with their 4,950 employees. If a sale is agreed, they will be left in "GoCo", a public-sector company, generating 8 per cent of United Kingdom electricity. The company's five remaining second-generation gas-cooled reactors, plus the Sizewell B pressurised water station, have long operating lives ahead in which to build up a fund to finance their own decommissioning, as well as pay dividends to investors. They would be privatised, and the proceeds used to top up the inadequate Magnox fund.

The chief proponent of an early sale, Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, wants to hand out that cash as tax cuts. This, it would seem, is where Mr Heseltine digs in his heels.



Hinkley Point A is expected to receive permission to stay in operation for another ten years

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Midland TeleTrade†	£37.50	£87.50	£112.50	£150
NetWest BrokerageLine	£31.25	£64	£94	£154
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STOCK MARKET

PHILIP PANGALOS

Share prices tumble on currency turmoil

RENEWED weakness for the dollar in turbulent currency markets and stronger-than-expected US GDP figures revived fears of a rise in US interest rates, dragging London shares lower as profit-taking wiped out Thursday's German rate cut-induced gains.

Financial year-end book-selling, renewed dollar weakness and falls for gilts and futures unsettled an already nervous cash market. Initial heavy falls on Wall Street further dampened sentiment in late London trading. The FT-SE 100 index ended near its lows, closing down 32.3 points to 3,137.9. Second-liners had a softer landing, with the FT-SE 250 slipping 3.9 points to 3,347.7.

Volume, boosted as investors squared their books for the financial year-end, reached 674 million shares. Dollar-related stocks suffered widespread losses. SmithKline Beecham 'A' fell 10p to 478p, Glaxo 11p to 706p, ICI 19p to 724p, HSBC 29p to 698p, TI Group 4p to 377p, Reuters 11p to 476p and Vodafone 1p to 198p.

Things looked brighter for companies that will benefit from any cuts in the betting levy which may take place to help compensate those who have suffered losses as a result of competition from the National Lottery. The companies, including pools groups, have blamed the National Lottery, which started in November, for a significant loss of business in recent months.

There was talk yesterday that Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, may be ready to cut the amount of tax that pools firms must pay to the Government, with an amendment to the Finance Bill now being introduced. One report suggested the Chancellor will cut the pools levy from 37.5 per cent to 32.5 per cent.

Shares in Ladbroke climbed 3p to 169p, on 5.61 million shares traded, in anticipation of a 5 per cent cut in the Government's betting levy. Elsewhere, Stanley Leisure added 5p to 389p and Zetters 2p to 108p.

Hopes of future steel price increases in the UK and continental Europe prompted further profit upgradings for British Steel, 3p firmer at 160p, after UBS raised its estimates on Thursday. Kleinwort Benson is thought



Pools companies are hoping for a cut in tax rates

to have lifted its 1995 profit estimate to £510 million from £450 million and to £825 million from £765 million for 1996. Elsewhere in the sector, ASW Holdings firmed 2p to 198p.

Lloyds Bank was a lonely bright spot in the banking sector, adding 10p to 616p, after touching 621p, in anticipation that Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society

will have to raise its 70p per share offer, which was made a week earlier. However, Danka has already made a paper profit of more than £400,000 on the 7.2 million shares it bought in a raid on Southern earlier this week.

Berkeley Business Group, which originally bid in February, fell 5p to 49p, after this week's share consolidation, though Berkeley is expected to improve its cash and paper

offer to raise its 70p per share offer, which was made a week earlier. However, Danka has already made a paper profit of more than £400,000 on the 7.2 million shares it bought in a raid on Southern earlier this week.

On the bid front, the battle between Danka and Berkeley for control of Southern Business Group, the office equipment and photocopier distributor currently in receipt of bids from Berkeley Business Group and Danka Business Systems, is heating up. Southern shares jumped 6p to 77p after Alco Standard of the US entered the fray with a takeover approach.

Unigate rose 6p to 386p as Hoare Govett lifted its profit forecasts after a better-than-expected 36 per cent profit jump at Nutricia, the Dutch food group where Unigate has a 32.6 per cent stake. Hoare raised its estimate for the year to end-March £4 million to £114 million, with £117 million (£112.5 million) for next year.

MOVERS OF THE WEEK

Current price	Change	Reason
Fluoro	+12p	Persistent bid speculation
Southdown	+35p	Better-than-expected profits
ICI	+14p	Agreed bid worth 14.5p
Nutricia	+14p	Speculative interest
Southdown	+14p	Higher bid expected next week
British Steel	+10p	Profit upgradings
Redland	+21p	Dividend cut
Marley	+12p	Rights issue at 12p
Joyes Group	+14p	Slide into red, Jimmy Moir resigns

offer for Southern next week. Berkeley is expected to raise its offer for Southern to the equivalent of at least 80p in cash and shares, with the cash element alone likely to rise from 52p previously to at least the 70p share level on offer from Danka.

Southern continued to advise shareholders to accept the bid by Danka - until Alco's intentions are clarified.

Elsewhere, International Communications and Data, the marketing services and database group, rose 3p to 14p after an agreed £9.4 million bid, worth 14.5p a share, from RR Donnelley. Continental Foods, the soft drinks to video tapes group which has a 10.76 per cent stake in ICD, is set to receive £103 million, giving a £14,000 surplus over the net book value. Continental Foods rose 5p to 74p.

Drummond Group gained 3p to 32p after Chateaux, the French conglomerate, which is one of Drummond's largest single shareholders, swapped preference shares for equity effectively at 47p.

Northumbrian Water climbed 6p to 949p on news that the proposed bid by Lyonnais des Eaux has been referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

There were modest, but widespread, gains for other water stocks, bolstered by hopes that others will follow North West Water, up 6p to 549p, with special dividend payments. Anglian rose 4p to 479p, Severn Trent 5p to 514p, Thames 3p to 481p, Welsh 3p to 612p and Yorkshire, expected by many to be the next to pay a special dividend, 1p to 32p.

GLETTED: The decline in the dollar brought down bond markets around the world, while the fall in Bunds dragged gilts even lower, virtually wiping out Thursday's gains.

Profit-taking saw the June series of the long gilt future close 17 ticks lower at £102.27 1/2, on volume of 53,000 contracts traded. Among conventional stocks, losses stretched to £3, for longer dated issues, while index-linked fell by up to 1p at the longer end.

NEW YORK: Shares on Wall Street recovered from early falls but sentiment remained negative. By midday the Dow Jones industrial average was down 17.98 points at 4,154.58.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):		
Dow Jones		4154.58 (-17.98)
S&P Composite		500.19 (-2.03)
Tokyo:		
Nikkei Average	16139.95	(-372.27)
Hong Kong:		
Hang Seng	8587.72	(-88.45)
Amsterdam:		
EOE Index	393.40	(-4.57)
Sydney:		
ASX	1008.6	(-22.0)
Frankfurt:		
DAX	1922.99	(-4.13)
Singapore:		
SEAC	2073.12	(-47.71)
Brussels:		
General	689.35	(-32.71)
Paris:		
CAC-40	1899.48	(-33.32)
Zurich:		
S&K Index	581.70	(-4.90)

London:	
FT 30	2407.4 (-32.2)
FT 100	3137.9 (-32.3)
FT-SE Mid 250	3434.7 (-3.9)
FT-SE-A 350	1538.4 (-15.1)
FT-SE Euroarea 100	1254.30 (-13.97)
FT A Alt-Share	1538.64 (-13.82)
FT Non Financials	2661.00 (-13.98)
FT Fixed Interest	110.67 (-0.19)
FT Govt Secs	91.57 (-0.41)
Banglans	37152
SEAQ Volume	760.38m
US\$4 (Datastrm)	148.92 (+0.4%)
US\$	1.6280 (+0.0315)
German Mark	2.2271 (+0.0266)
Exchange Index	85.3 (-0.39)
Bank of England official clearing	48.4
£-ECU	1.2053
£-SDR	1.0063

Albright & Wilson (150)	164
Beale	180
Collegues	161
Dalrymple (128)	130
Dunelm (130)	136
Esprit Int (175)	175
Geard Int Inv C (100)	99
Golden Rose Cos (135)	116
HTK Int/Gth Split (100)	101
Int-Split Div Pt (100)	105
Inv Capital Wts	19
Inv Tst of Inv Tst	84
Inv Tst of Inv Tst Wts	56
Melrose Energy Wts	37
Mont UK Smir Cos (100)	95
ditto Wts	43
Nat Power (p/p) (470)	164
PTS Group (90)	92
PowerGen (p/p) (512)	184
Schur Inc Gwth Fd US	516
Scot Ornith Smir Cos (100)	95
Superfame Group (50)	42
Superfame Wts	6
Throg Dual Zero Div Pt	103
Zonfoams (145)	175

Acorn Computer n/p (50)	57
Beaufort n/p (28)	42
Horace Smi App n/p (90)	42
Marley n/p (112)	15
Riding Group n/p (8)	37
Unit Group n/p (39)	11

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TEMPUS

Calor's early spring

GLOBAL warming looks like the last straw for Calor Group. While the rest of us were bemused by the appearance of spring flowers in February, Calor Group's bottled gas salesmen were gnashing their teeth. Volumes were down by 11 per cent in the second half last year and the first quarter of 1995 looks equally bad.

Things would be much worse but for Calor's prescient decision to cut costs in 1993: while volumes plunged and prices fell, Calor's profits from liquid petroleum gas sales were only 9 per cent below the previous year.

Unfortunately, Calor also had a mixed story to tell elsewhere. Its investments in new businesses have yet to pay off. Pam Gas, the Eastern European venture with SHV, is making money but Calor has yet to see any dividends. Likewise, drinks dispensing is in

start-up mode and making losses, while Calor's flirtation with natural gas will take years to show a return.

If the world is warming up, Calor may be right to target markets in the Southern Hemisphere where bottled gas is used for cooking rather than heating. Moreover, such markets are likely to be less interesting for mains gas suppliers which need bigger volumes to justify their investment in laying pipes.

Calor, with its majority shareholder SHV, has the experience and financial clout to be successful overseas but investors who are looking for short-term performance would be better off selling. SHV seems to have big investment plans for its adopted child and it is in no mood to encourage Calor to raise the dividend yet.

Thorn EMI

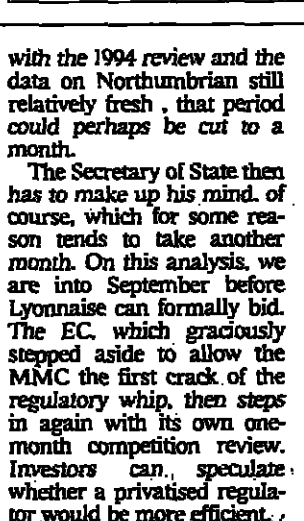
YESTERDAY'S sale of the sensors business and clearance of the deal with Thomson-CSF means Thorn has reached the end of its disposal and can concentrate on its core activities of music, rental and music retail.

The £32 million exceptional hit is hardly small but it is broadly in line with what the market was expecting and is a price worth paying as it allows Thorn to rid itself once and for all of its unwanted electronics subsidiary. In the past few months, Thorn has jettisoned businesses with £170 million of turnover with one £10 million business remaining. A side-effect of all this corporate activity will be that the results for the year to March 31 will be littered with exceptional gains. On top of yesterday's £32 million charge,

there is the not insignificant exceptional item relating to the closure of the Rombe-lows chain. Thorn originally estimated this would be about £16 million, but after the sale of a chunk of stores to Escorn, the German retailer, last month, this figure is likely to fall to about £10 million.

Exceptionals aside, the longer-term prospects for Thorn look promising.

There is potential to raise music margins to the targeted 16 per cent. HMV is progressing well and there has been some recovery in the rental division. Now that the market has come to terms with the decision to shelve demerger plans, the shares should outperform.



Northumbrian

THE 68,000 shareholders in Northumbrian Water, 67,500 of whom have an average of 178 shares each, will need to be patient. If past experience is anything to go by, an eventual takeover by Lyonnais des Eaux could be a long time coming.

The president is the 1989 approach for Three Valleys by the other French water concern, Générale des Eaux. Started in September 1989, this took almost 11 months before the French took control. If the Monopolies Commission, by early July, allows the bid through, it will do so after quantifying what benefits should flow to consumers. The Secretary of State will then have to agree with Ofwat, the water regulator, just how those benefits should be achieved, whether by a justness of the pricing regime or customer rebates. This took three months in the case of Three Valleys, but

worth of some \$4 billion and claims a large share of the UK copier market. In 1993, Alco moved into the UK copier market with the takeover of Erskine House and if it succeeds in acquiring SBC, its market share will double and at the same time pocket some £9 million of SBC's cash. Alco's intervention will be distressing for Berkeley Business Group which needs to buy SBC and is rumoured to be considering an increased offer to outbid the 70p in cash offered by Danka. The latter's bid puts SBC on an exit multiple of just over 13 times, not far from the market average.

If Alco bids, its best strategy would be to secure firm irrevocable commitments from SBC's directors who own 8 per cent and the George Stuart trust which has about 14 per cent. That might require a 10 per cent premium to the offer on the table but would give Alco an insurance policy in case a rival launches a silly bid.

Southern Business

FOR a company with flatish earnings prospects this year and a history of run-ins with regulators, Southern Business Group is attracting an impressive list of bidders. Alco Standard, the latest to enter the fray, has a market

COMMODITIES

Commodity	Price	Change
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LIFE OPTIONS

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Sparring Money Rates:	5-6 1/2
Sparring Money Rates:	6-6 1/2
Overnight: open 6 1/2, close 6 1/2	
Local Authority Depts:	9 1/4
Securitizing CDOs:	6-6 1/2
Dollar CDOs:	6-6 1/2
Building Society CDOs:	5-6 1/2
TREASURY BILLS: Applies: 13:00pm	
55% Lat: 158:47.07, 158:20:26.75	
Week: 15:00pm	

EUROPEAN SPOT	
Currency	7 day
Dollar:	0 1/2
Swiss Franc:	1/2
French Franc:	1/2
Swiss Franc:	1/2
Year:	

GOLD/SPOT IN	
Bullion: Open \$285.00-296.35	Close \$295.00
Low \$385.00-50.00	Avg \$386.00
Krugerrand: \$293.00-295.00	(H24) \$294.75
Platinum: \$434.75	\$263.80 Silver: \$5.25

STERLING SPOT	
Mkt Rates for Mar 31:	Range
Amsterdam	2,490.0-2,510.0
Bombay	47.5-48.0
Copenhagen	8.9-13.89 10.0
Dublin	2.96-1,000.0
Frankfurt	2,500.0-2,500.0
London	254.73-257.60
Madrid	256.95-256.26
Paris	256.95-256.26
Montreal	2,226.0-2,276.0
New York	1,607.0-1,621.0
Osaka	9,200.0-9,150.0
Paris	1,717.00-1,560.0
Stockholm	1,800.0-1,960.0
Vienna	1,40.37-142.17
Zurich	15.50-15.54
London	1,025.5-1,554.3

Source: <i>Inter</i>

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Investors return to Europe

Helen Pridham finds the German rate cut could revive market interest

Euro-sceptics exist not just in politics. Investors in Europe have also become increasingly sceptical over the past year as continental stock markets have fallen. Many have voted with their feet. Some £15 billion was withdrawn from European unit trusts last year — the highest from any sector — and money has continued to ebb away this year. European investment trusts have also fallen from favour, with some recently standing at discounts of 15 per cent or more.

When sentiment gets this bearish, it can be a good sign that markets are about to turn, argues Talal Shakerchi, manager of Old Mutual's European unit trust, the sector's top performer over three and five years. He says: "When the general perception is that markets are weak, it can be a good buying opportunity. The cut in German interest rates earlier this week could also help to trigger a reversal in market trends. There is now a more positive tone."

But were not some fund managers telling investors a similar story at the start of last year? That was when two of the biggest investment trusts — the Kleinwort Benson and Mercury European Privatisation trusts — each raised about £500 million. At that time,

European stock markets were riding high.

Paul Harwood, manager of the Mercury trust, says investors were too optimistic. He says: "There were, and still are, good long-term arguments for investing in European privatisations, but some investors mistakenly thought they would be able to make a quick, short-term profit with these trusts as they had staggard various UK privatisations."

These disappointed investors, who sold when their hopes were dashed, have driven the price of the two trusts down. Both now stand on price discounts of about 15 per cent. But the share prices of investment trusts do not always reflect their underlying performance. In this respect, the two trusts have not done so badly. Mercury is ahead. The value of its investments now stand at 96.7p per share, against 95p at outset, while the NAV of Kleinwort Benson's trust is 87.8p.

A similar contradiction between sentiment and underlying value is evident in continental bourses. Depressed share prices are in contrast to a vibrant economic recovery. But the situation could turn, and recent strong buying of French shares indicates that this could already be happening.

Peter Young, who runs Mor-



Prague could be a tempting place for investors

gan Grenfell's European Growth unit trust, says: "The economic cycle in Europe tends to follow behind developments in the US and the UK. The Continent entered the recession later than we did and the economic recovery started later. Company earnings are now growing sharply and will continue to do so next year. We are seeing earnings growth across all European markets of 20 per cent or more this year

and next." However, stock markets do not yet reflect this recovery, partly because US investors have not been so keen on Europe.

Mr Young expects them to become net investors again: "After recent events in Mexico, they have become somewhat less keen on emerging markets than they were last year and Europe now looks relatively cheap compared to other parts of the world." He points out

that growth and development in the emerging Eastern European economies, such as the Czech and Slovak Republics, Poland and Hungary, are bringing increasing benefits to Europe. "Eastern Europe is still a very good story. There are an increasing number of joint ventures occurring with European Union companies."

The UK unit trust arm of Credit Suisse, the investment manager, is also positive about the future, and has launched a new European unit trust this year as proof. It has recruited as its manager, Patricia Maxwell-Arnot, who previously ran Lazard's European fund.

She argues: "All the evidence in Europe points to a continuing high level of economic activity, with industrial production showing sharp increases, especially in countries like Sweden and Italy which saw double-digit increases late last year." However, she points out that the recent international currency turmoil, with the lira, peseta, and Swedish krona all showing varying degrees of weakness against the mark, has not helped market sentiment.

There is no guarantee that things will not get worse in European stock markets before they get better, but all the signs are that markets could bounce back before too long.

So existing investors would be well advised to hang on in there. For investors who want to gain European exposure, Peter Wallis, investment trust expert at Credit Lyonnais Ltd, says there is a classic case for buying an investment trust rather than a unit trust.

Apart from Mercury's European Privatisation trust, he favours Ivory & Sims's Continental Assets and European Assets trusts — currently trading at 16 per cent discounts.

Consistent funds, according to Unit Trust Analysis, apart from those mentioned, include MGM European Growth, Royal Life European and Scottish Widows European.

Elderly seek redress on home-income plans

Two firms of solicitors working for more than 300 elderly people who took out home-income plans through Fisher Prew Smith, the failed financial adviser, funded by loans from the West Bromwich Building Society are to issue a group writ against the society.

Richard Barnett, of Barnett Sampson, a London solicitor, and Rod Knight, of J. Keith Park, a Merseyside firm of solicitors, say that their main priority is to get their clients back into the position they would have been in if they had never taken out plans.

The plans involved elderly people mortgaging their homes and invest-

ing the proceeds in bonds managed by brokers or insurance companies. Investors lost heavily and are left with mortgages many of them cannot pay.

The writ will be issued after a House of Lords ruling expected next month that will clarify how much money individual victims can recover from the Investors' Compensation Scheme.

Home-income plans have now been banned. Nearly £30 million has been paid out by the Investors' Compensation Scheme already, but the scheme has, in turn, served a writ on ten building societies, including the West Bromwich, in an attempt to force them to pay some of the compensation.

The West Bromwich Building Soci-

ety came under fierce attack from MPs at a hearing of the Commons Treasury Select Committee this week for its role in the home-income plan scandal.

Brian Sedgemore, Labour MP for Hackney South and Shoreditch, accused the society of deliberately misleading customers as to the nature of the plans.

John Baker, West Bromwich chairman, rejected the allegations, which followed the distribution by Mike O'Brien, Labour MP for Warwickshire North and also a member of the committee, of the first draft of an internal report drawn up two years ago by Fimber, regulator of Fisher Prew Smith. The West Bromwich Building

Society said that all it did was lend money. It says it had nothing to do with the subsequent investments.

The Securities and Investments Board, which regulated the West Bromwich Building Society's investment activities until last year, told the Treasury Select Committee this week that it had a subsequent version of the report, but said it would never release details.

It said that would jeopardise its continuing investigations into the society's role and afterwards leave the Securities and Investments Board open to being sued for libel.

SARA MCCONNELL

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Find out why pension plans are not all the same.

The Equitable Life



ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance
Editor

Lenders finally show borrowers some affection

It is no one's youthful ambition to have a mortgage. This goes to show how sensible children are, as a home loan is the one appendage of adulthood that we would all rather be without.

Over the past few months, life has, as usual, been hard on borrowers. Not only is income support for unemployed homebuyers to be reduced, but next Thursday also brings a further decrease from 20 per cent to 15 per cent in mortgage interest tax relief. This is the latest turn for the worse in the concession's long, lingering, last illness. Meanwhile, mortgage rates may still rise again as Christmas approaches.

But before borrowers start to feel too sorry for themselves, there are suddenly a number of reasons for them to be slightly more cheerful, thanks to increased competition among lenders and a High Court judge's interpretation of the Building Societies Act, 1986.

The ruling made in the Halifax case this week allows the 2.4 million Halifax and Leeds borrowers to benefit from the free share issue. They should receive about £500 apiece, which would cover one month's payment on a £70,000 mortgage.

In spite of last year's Cheltenham & Gloucester decision, which excluded that society's 400,000 borrowers, the judge took as his reference point the Abbey National judgment allowing borrowers to participate in the share free-for-all.

It now seems certain that other societies wishing to leave behind their mutual past to become public companies will use the Halifax scheme as their example. This means that borrowers should receive their rightful due, as members

and owners of the society, a claim that has been obscured by the convoluted Building Societies Act.

When mortgage business began to become scarce, the first instinct of lenders was to shower love and affection on new customers. Although this trend continues, a few more enlightened banks and building societies are now finally paying more attention to their existing borrowers.

This encouraging development has been inspired by the realisation that a customer who has met his mortgage payments without fail is an attractive proposition for a competitor — especially if you have said "no" to his request for one of your new super-improved discount offers.

Next week, as we report on page 28, the Abbey National will start to consider applications from creditworthy existing borrowers for 100 per cent mortgages.

This new niche market is likely also to be pursued by other lenders, as the upwardly mobile whose homes have taken a downturn in value become a sought-after commodity.

After the wedding

THE Cheltenham & Gloucester has run into the arms of Lloyds Bank and the pair will now walk off into the sunset together. But the end of the story has not yet been written, and may yet show that marrying for money does not bring happiness.

The borrowers who curiously voted for a deal from which they gained nothing, unless they were also investors with the society, may prove to have done well from the deal. They should benefit, at first, from C&G's pledge to keep its mortgage rates below those of the competition. This should continue under the mortgage price war, which was promised this week by Brian Pitman, chief executive of Lloyds. The C&G will be the special advance division in this campaign.

But savers should reflect that one of the reasons why Mr Pitman was said to have been happier to give them cash, rather than shares, was that he was unwilling to dilute earnings per share growth at the bank. For a while, rates will remain generous to prevent defections to other societies contemplating flotation. But, thereafter, Mr Pitman's care for economy could influence C&G rate policy.

Anne Ashworth gives a preview of the winners and losers in the Halifax flotation after the Leeds merger

Who will qualify for a little extra

More than 10 million savers and homebuyers are in line for a little extra when the Halifax comes to the stock market in 1997, after its merger with the Leeds. Before the merger vote on May 22, customers will receive a Schedule 16 statement giving details. To find out more now, read on.

Q Will every customer benefit?

A Unfortunately not. Only those who were savers with at least £100 invested in certain types of account and/or borrowers with outstanding mortgages of £100 or more on November 25, 1994, qualify to receive shares under the basic distribution where a fixed number of free shares will be available. If you are both a saver and a borrower, you will get two sets of shares. You must stay with the Halifax until its conversion into a publicly quoted bank and keep the balance on your savings or mortgage account at £100 minimum. In addition, anyone with a savings balance of between £1,000 and £50,000 who has stayed true to the society for a period of two years ending on the qualifying date for conversion (to be announced)

will be given extra free shares under the variable distribution. The number will be based on the lowest total balance in the account, or accounts at a series of reference dates, November 25, 1994, being the first of these. The other dates will be announced retrospectively, perhaps at the time of conversion, to avoid speculative flows of cash. Your balance will fall into a series of bands, each with its own share allocation.

Q You say "specific accounts". Which ones?

A The right to benefit from a conversion, or a merger, is restricted to members of the society. You are a member and entitled to take part in the merger and conversion votes if you hold a share account. You are not a member and have no vote if you only hold a deposit or offshore account (see right).

Q How much will I receive?

A Assuming the Halifax has a stock market value of £10 billion, everyone should get about £500 worth of shares in the basic distribution. Since the majority of the free shares will be reserved for this part of the giveaway, the amounts for

the variable distribution will not be as generous as the bonuses in the Lloyds/C&G deal. Rob Thomas, building societies analyst at UBS, the broker, estimates a saver with £50,000 might get £3,000-worth.

Q What happens if I withdraw any money?

A As the reference dates remain a secret, you will almost certainly lose out. Do not let your balance fall below its level at November 25, 1994. You are free to switch your cash to an account with a higher

rate of interest, but moving to a deposit account would deprive you of free shares. The societies reject the claim that they are keeping savers locked in: "It is only reasonable to expect savers to maintain a reasonable balance."

Q What about children and joint accounts?

A Under 18s cannot vote but will get a cash bonus. In both the basic and the variable distribution, only the first named holder on a joint account will benefit.

DOES YOUR ACCOUNT COUNT?

Halifax share accounts: Premium Xtra, Special Reserve Bond, Halifax Tessa, 90-day Xtra, Instant Xtra Plus, Paid-Up Shares, SAYE, Guaranteed Reserve, Stepped Income Reserve, Sharesave. Certain closed issues are also eligible. Helpline: 0800 834625.

Halifax deposit accounts: Deposit, Cardcash, Asset Reserve, Cheque, Maxim, Time Deposit or Halifax Visa. Offshore accounts from Halifax International Jersey and Banco Halifax Hispania.

Leeds share accounts: Liquid Gold, Solid Gold, Bonus Gold, Fixed Rate Bonds, SAYE, Tessa Gold.

Leeds deposit accounts: AVC, Liquid Gold Deposit, Treasurers Account, All Leeds Overseas Limited accounts, Horizon Share Deposit, Deposit GRE and Time Deposits. Helpline: 0800 888844.

The Permanent Interest Bearing Shares (PIBS) of both societies qualify for both distributions. Secured personal loans also qualify.



Market bound: Mike Blackburn, Halifax chief executive

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In uncertainty...

China sits waiting for a new leader to emerge. And nowhere can be sure to avoid the impact of the new regime. In Europe, political confusion is the order of the day. Both Great Britain and Italy see their current political order either threatened or in tatters as a result of crises of confidence or scandals. But Europe has its share of world class companies, and the prospect of vigorous competition as Eastern Europe rebuilds.

North America, too, has had its own share of investment inertia as the Clinton administration founders on a reef of unpopularity and allegations, but US companies are renowned for their ability to react positively to competition and opportunity.

There is opportunity.

And in the Far East, political uncertainty in North Korea continues to cast a shadow over parts of the region. Nonetheless, the emerging economies on the Pacific Rim still contain some of the most exciting and ambitious companies to be found anywhere in the world — not least in the extremely attractive high-tech sector.

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What is the true cost of a loan?

Jean Eaglesham finds that annual percentage rates can be misleading



IF YOU are thinking of switching to one of the low fixed-rate or discount mortgage deals on offer, you should be wary of relying on the annual percentage rate (APR) to compare one rate with another. Lenders and other advisers say the way they now have to work out the APR, the key cost measure used in advertisements, is misleading and "flawed".

The APR for fixed-rate loans used to be calculated to show the total cost of fixed and variable rates and fees over the term of the mortgage, shown as an annual figure. The lower the APR, the cheaper the loan. But after a court ruling, in a case brought against NatWest by Devon Trading Standards Office, the figure you, as a borrower, will be given for a fixed-rate deal assumes that you pay the fixed rate for the whole of the mortgage term, rather than paying the (higher) variable rate when the fixed-rate period is over.

Ian Darby, marketing director of John Charcol, the independent financial adviser, says the APR "is a completely worthless experiment now". He adds: "Mortgage advisers are just not helping customers — they are not being given the

information they need to make the right decision."

Bob Imrie, deputy director of Devon TSO, describes the judgment as "wholly flawed — it stinks".

Borrowers need more than ever to compare one rate with another. As well as comparing a wide range of fixed rates over different periods, and working out the up-front charges (which can total thousands of pounds) they need to take into account the variable rate they will have to pay when the fixed rate is over. Add into the comparison redemption penalties for switching to another lender and the problem becomes clear.

Take one of the lowest fixed rates on offer. Yorkshire Building Society is offering 3.99 per cent fixed for one year and 6.99 per cent for two. Using the new calculation, the APR for two years, at 7.5 per cent, is almost twice as high as the 4.3 per cent quoted for the one-year fix. The APR figures on the older, more logical, basis are almost identical at 8.6 per cent for the one year and 8.8 per cent for two years.

The society is unhappy that it is "obliged by law to quote figures which now mean very little to anybody". It says: "The quicker we can get back to the use of APRs as a proper benchmark, the better."

Woolwich Building Society still uses the old APR system for quotes given to individual customers in its branches. Like all lenders it has to quote the new, lower APRs in advertisements, in spite of thinking the figures are very misleading. "The whole APR system at the moment is a nonsense."

The Department of Trade and Industry says it is hamstrung by European legislation, which is due to be reviewed later this year.

Graeme Jacobs, money editor at Consumers' Association, says the situation is "absolutely outrageous". The advice for anyone looking for a good deal is either to get independent advice or to get a number of individual quotations from lenders that appear to have competitive rates.



Shopping around for loan deals could cut the price of putting a roof over your head

Own your home sooner



FROM this week, tax relief on mortgage interest will be cut to 15 per cent. It will be worth a maximum of £30 a month to homeowners at current interest rates. Buying a house now looks less and less like an investment and more like an expense.

With a "feel-bad" factor like this, lenders are starting to respond to borrowers who want to get rid of their debt as soon as they can.

Yorkshire Bank launched its "flexible-payment mortgage" last year. The plan at the outset is to step up the payments each year and thus reduce the time it takes to pay off the loan, as well as cutting the total cost.

On a typical £50,000 mortgage, Yorkshire's scheme assumes the same monthly repayments, £370.74 for the first year, as on its standard 25-

year mortgage. But each year this increases by 1.5 per cent, reaching £523.68 a month by the eighteenth and final year. The mortgage is thus paid off six-and-a-half years early and the total cost, at today's 8.35 per cent interest, is £101,695, £19,000 less than the total cost of a 25-year mortgage. The savings can be even greater if payments are made on a weekly or fortnightly basis.

Another lender offering this flexible approach is UCB Home Loans, which launched a Term Master plan last year. Based in Sutton, Surrey, UCB is a division of Compagnie Bancaire, one of France's largest banking groups. Michael Bolton, marketing manager, explains: "If you can afford to pay the equivalent of, say, 10 or 11 per cent it makes sense to 'overpay', reduce the length of the mortgage and at the same time to cut the total cost."

The UCB scheme is currently based on a variable interest rate of 7.99 per cent. Normal monthly repayments on a

£50,000 25-year loan worked out at £350, but by paying an extra, say, £53 a month, the mortgage term is reduced to 18 years: the total repayment cost falls accordingly from just under £117,000 to £95,465.

With both these schemes, if your circumstances change, you can alter your monthly payments, up or down (to a minimum level) and adjust the mortgage term within the company's normal range.

Most building societies will allow homeowners to make overpayments on their mortgage, either as a one-off or as an additional monthly payment. If you want to make overpayments, make sure your lender can credit your mortgage account with the money immediately. If it waits until the end of the year, put the money aside in a savings account so that it earns interest, and pay it over at the end of the year. Lenders often set a minimum amount.

GERRY TAYLOR

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THE TIMES MONEY INFORMATION SERVICE

	1990	1991	% Change
International	10,650	13,390	+11.10
Latin America	1,440	1,710	+18.75
NE Americas	1,640	1,950	+18.90
Asia	1,550	1,850	+19.35
Europe	1,650	1,950	+18.18
Rest of World	1,310	1,530	+16.80
Domestic	62,140	66,680	+7.32
U.S.	14,110	15,210	+7.80
Europe	22,910	21,130	-7.77
Asia	13,210	13,810	+4.54
Rest of World	11,910	12,520	+5.12
Foreign Travel	10,470	10,780	+2.96
U.S.	2,310	2,410	+4.33
Europe	4,410	4,210	-4.53
Asia	2,810	2,910	+3.56
Rest of World	1,960	2,260	+15.31
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SECRET

Ian Hunter looks at the potential rewards from hunting for treasure

Dig in for rich pickings

If you despair of winning the National Lottery, yet dream of becoming rich overnight, digging for treasure could be the answer.

As Eric Lawes, a retired gardener, discovered, all you need is a metal detector, some enthusiasm, and a lot of luck.

In 1992, Mr Lawes was responsible for one of Britain's greatest treasure finds. While searching a field in Hoxne, Suffolk, he discovered more than 500 gold and silver coins, together with a further 200 objects, including gold bracelets and silver spoons. The find dates back to the 5th century.

Finders are not restricted to antiquities. According to Edward Fletcher, a leading writer on metal detecting, 20,000 engagement rings are found on British beaches every year.

The laws relating to treasure hunting date back to Edward I. The general position is that if the original owner of an object cannot be located by reasonable means, the finder can keep what he or she has found. However, if the true owner should re-appear, the finder must hand over what has been found.

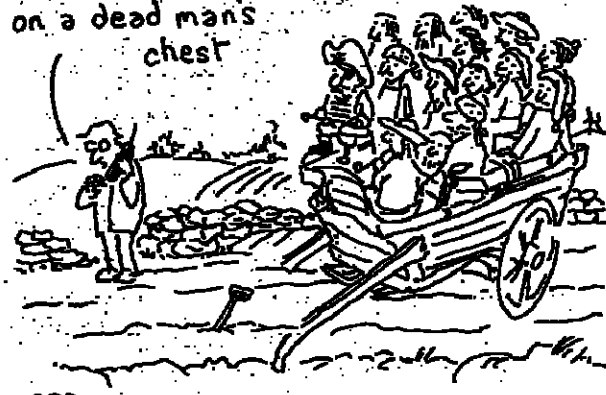
If the owner of gold or silver objects, which have been deliberately concealed, cannot be traced, the property is declared treasure trove and becomes the property of the Crown.

The rules do not extend to coins and other antiquities made of copper, bronze or other base metals. Nor does it include property deliberately abandoned or lost.

Treasure trove applies only if the last owner intended to recover the property at a later date. Any find must not be concealed and should be reported to the local coroner, the police, or the local museum. It should then be handed over. If finders fail to comply, they may be convicted of theft.

A coroner may decide to hold an inquest to decide whether the find is treasure.

Hello, police?
I've found fifteen men
on a dead man's
chest



trove. Coroners will also rule on any dispute over the identity of the finder. If the haul is declared treasure trove, it will be offered to the local museum or, if it is exceptional, to the British Museum.

The finder will be paid the market value for the find, which is assessed by an independent committee appointed by the Treasury. It is then possible for the British Museum, or another museum, to acquire the find on the payment of the market value.

The sum paid is passed on to the finder by the Department of National Heritage as an ex-gratia reward. It is intended to encourage the proper reporting of finds. If no museum wants the treasure trove, it will be returned to the finder.

The frequency with which inquests are held depends on the local coroner. Any payment is made to the actual finder and not to the owner of the land on which it is found.

The British Museum is supporting a new Treasure Bill that, if implemented, will change the law governing treasure trove. The main aims are to remove the need to show that objects have been deliberately concealed; to make clear how much gold or silver the goods found must contain in order to qualify as treasure trove; to include objects found

in association with finds of treasure within the definition of treasure trove.

The Bill would also make it easier to determine what treasure trove is and would provide a new offence of non-declaration of treasure.

The British Museum is usually interested to hear about any finds. The student rooms at the museum will help to identify objects, generally without appointment. However, the museum will not carry out valuations.

Both the leading auction houses, Sotheby's and Christie's, offer free verbal valua-

tions. Written valuations for insurance, inheritance tax or other purposes are also available. Advice can be obtained on applications for export licences.

Metal detectors vary greatly in price, depending on their sophistication. Some can be bought for as little as £50, others can cost £700.

Potential treasure sites can be located by sifting through old public library records. Old market and fair sites are often rich hunting grounds. Old maps and local historical societies can also provide sources of useful information.

Some metal-detector clubs organise weekend trips and pay farmers for the right to search their land. Many enter into share agreements by which half the value of any find is shared with the landowner.

There is a code of practice for users of metal detectors. It cautions them not to trespass and to ask permission before venturing on to private land. All unusual finds should be reported to the landowner.

Users should also be aware that it is illegal to use a metal detector on a listed ancient monument unless permission has been obtained from the Secretary of State for the Environment.

Stay-at-home mothers and tax

From Frances Savin

Sir, As Anne Ashworth says in her article (Weekend Money, March 18) on the ongoing reduction in the value of the married couple's allowance, it is unfair to give one partner a higher allowance — when both are taxpayers. In fact, the people who gained the most material advantage when the 1990 reform of personal taxation was introduced were those high-earning couples who had previously opted for independent taxation, and lost the then married man's allowance. Subsequently, they enjoyed two-and-a-half personal allowances, presumably Mr Clarke's "bit of an anomaly".

What of the still many women who wish to remain in the home, and have little or no income? Particularly when their children are young, there is a high proportion of full-time mothers or fathers. The

original purpose of the former married man's allowance was to recognise the costs of being a couple. This is now being whittled away. The 1986 Green Paper, which prepared the ground for 1990, suggested that the allowance be replaced by allowing the transfer of the unused tax allowance to the earning partner. This was not implemented and thus we fall between two stools.

The recent findings of the Rowntree report indicate that families with children suffer disproportionate poverty. Our organisation believes that some fiscal recognition of the work and social contribution of mothers would lead to a healthier society.

Yours sincerely,
FRANCES SAVIN
(Chairman),
Full Time Mothers,
3 Wakelin Chase,
Ingatesone, Essex.

Ernie should have a time limit

From Mr P. G. Couillaud

Sir, It would seem that the popularity of Premium Bonds remains very infectious with more and more punters investing in them. There is, however, one area of the scheme which needs to be addressed without further delay.

Despite an increase in the top prize, the number of unclaimed prizes has risen to £12 million and is still rising. Is there any sense in allowing such an absurd situation to continue unchecked? I think not.

The Bonds and Stocks Office should seriously consider re-allocating unclaimed prizes to the prize fund. Moreover, a time limit, not exceeding six months, should be imposed on all those wishing to claim unpaid prizes.

Public interest in this manner could be heightened, by bring-

ing to the attention of all claimants, a notice board in all Crown Post Offices, making it easier to reduce the ever-increasing number of prizes that are rising by the month. Yours faithfully,
PETER G. COUILLAUD,
89 Eight Acres,
Tring,
Hertfordshire.

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British Gas saga

From Mrs H. A. Kent

Sir, On reading Alan H. Green's letter (Weekend Money, March 25) I felt I had to add my penny's worth.

When I received my quarterly bill in October 1994, I saw it had not been stamped in the usual way with the red stamp "paid by direct debit". I made two phone calls with no result: so I wrote to the customer liaison officer on

November 19, but received no reply. On receiving my November/December bank statement, I found that British Gas had debited my account twice within three days. I wrote again to the customer liaison officer on December 18.

I received a reply on January 11 telling me that the affair was being "looked into". Then, I received a revised bill, giving me a credit for both debits. Before I could do anything about this, I received yet

another bill from the billing officer telling me that unless this bill was paid immediately, British Gas would have to consider refusing me this type of payment.

On March 16, I sent British Gas a copy of everything that I had received or sent. Of course, I have not yet received a reply. Yours faithfully,
H. A. KENT,
52 Manor Court,
Bagleys Lane, SW6.

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THE INTERNATIONAL OFFSHORE FINANCIAL REVIEW

OFFSHORE FUND PERFORMANCE TO 1ST MARCH 1995				
SINCE LAUNCH		OVER 5 YEARS		
FUND NAME	LAUNCH DATE	% CHANGE	POSITION IN SECTOR	% CHANGE
International Growth	25-1-83	+283	3 out of 25	+47.3
Emerging Companies	2-6-85	+533.5	1 out of 38	+128.0
American Growth	21-4-88	+242.2	1 out of 22	+142.4
Far Eastern Growth	25-1-86	+341.1	1 out of 19	+70.4
Japanese Growth	28-11-91	+25.7	4 out of 89	
UK Growth	8-11-86	+118.5	7 out of 22	+14.7
Global Equity	24-10-87	+20.5	1 out of 31	+187.1
Global Bond	2-12-92	+4.1	19 out of 43	
Global Income	8-3-93	+81.4	10 out of 94	
Global Real Estate	2-1-95	2.2	12 out of 42	

have won in the last five years — now totalling more than thirty.

Whatever your investment preference and objective, could there be a clearer reflection of the quality of our investment management?



Perpetual

Over the past 5 years, 5 out of 6 Funds have achieved top quartile performance. Figures are to 1st March 1995, are in US Dollar terms, and are on an after-tax, reinvested income basis, net of withholding taxes (source: Micropal). Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. The value of an investment and the income from it can go down as well as up.

Pep choice that may cramp your style

Single-company pension equity plans can be an attractive option if you want to invest direct in shares and take your dividends and any capital gains free from tax. Many existing shareholders are being encouraged to transfer their holdings into these plans. But if you choose the same shares for several years running, you could find you are cramping your style for the future.

Under the current Pep rules, you can invest up to £3,000 a year in one company's shares in addition to your general Pep allowance of £6,000, which can be spread among shares, unit and investment trusts.

Most single-company Pep business is corporate sponsored. Companies such as British Gas, Boots and Scottish & Newcastle run single-company Peps for their own shareholders and employees.

The attraction of corporate single-company Peps is that they tend to have lower annual costs than self-select single-company Peps offered by plan managers that let you choose whichever shares you want.

But one of the ways in which the costs of the corporate plans are kept low is by merging the annual allowances of investors who put money in for more than one year. This will lead to problems if you want to change your investment strategy in future.

There is nothing to stop you transferring your Pep to another plan manager —

although some corporate single-company Peps levy hefty transfer penalties of £50 or more — but you will not be able to unscramble the different Pep years' allowances.

You will have to transfer the whole amount and if you want to buy other shares you will have to switch the total into one new holding.

You cannot diversify your portfolio unless you cash in, which will mean that you lose all or part of a previous year's Pep allowance.

At the Bank of Scotland, which operates its own self-select single-company Pep as well as a number of corporate plans, Douglas Tait explains: "With our self-select plan, we keep each year's plan separate so that even if investors choose the same share for several years, they could subsequently sell one year's shares and invest somewhere else. But this would not be possible with our corporate single-company Peps, where each year's allowance is merged into one plan."

Nick Nichols of the Pep Managers' Association, agrees: "The 'all or nothing' rule for merged Peps does seem unfair on investors." The association has been pressing the Government for some time for changes in the rules on single-company Peps to make them more like general Peps.

"They must also be transferred as one entity from one manager to another if they have been merged, but their investments can be diversified."

HELEN PRIDHAM

CGI

The indexed rise for calculating the indexation allowance on assets disposed of in February 1995

Month purchased	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
January	0.778	0.692	0.611	0.526	0.489	0.422	0.417
February	0.771	0.685	0.598	0.521	0.483	0.417	0.411
March	0.849	0.767	0.679	0.583	0.519	0.450	0.388
April	0.813	0.743	0.657	0.550	0.504	0.443	0.383
May	0.800	0.736	0.651	0.543	0.502	0.442	0.378
June	0.795	0.731	0.647	0.539	0.494	0.435	0.377
July	0.794	0.722	0.633	0.538	0.502	0.439	0.381
August	0.794	0.715	0.630	0.539	0.494	0.435	0.355
September	0.795	0.707	0.620	0.537	0.492	0.428	0.342
October	0.786	0.701	0.615	0.532	0.480	0.421	0.335
November	0.777	0.691	0.617	0.529	0.475	0.422	0.332
December	0.780	0.691	0.617	0.529	0.475	0.422	0.332

Month purchased	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
January	0.323	0.229	0.128	0.063	0.055	0.040	0.006
February	0.314	0.222	0.122	0.078	0.058	0.034	0.001
March	0.308	0.210	0.118	0.078	0.055	0.019	0.001
April	0.385	0.174	0.104	0.058	0.041	0.015	0.001
May	0.277	0.184	0.104	0.058	0.042	0.015	0.001
June	0.273	0.159	0.098	0.058	0.044	0.020	0.001
July	0.272	0.159	0.095	0.058	0.040	0.015	0.001
August	0.269	0.136	0.091	0.054	0.038	0.013	0.001
September	0.260	0.127	0.087	0.050	0.038	0.012	0.001
October	0.260	0.130	0.083	0.052	0.037	0.011	0.001
November	0.240	0.130	0.083	0.052	0.037	0.011	0.001
December	0.237	0.131	0.083	0.055	0.035	0.005	0.001

The FR month for disposals by individuals on or after April 6, 1985 (April 1, 1985 for companies) is the month in which the allowable expenditure was incurred, or March 1982 where the expenditure was incurred before that month.

For more information, telephone Marion Buchanan on +44 (0) 1534 607660, or send her a fax on +44 (0) 1534 38918.

Alternatively, fill in the coupon below.

To: Perpetual Unit Trust Management (Jersey) Limited, PO Box 459, d'Hautville Chambers, Seale Street, St Helier, Jersey, JE4 8WS, Channel Islands. Please send me details on Perpetual's range of Offshore funds.

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32 UNIT TRUST PRICES

S&P 500				DOW JONES				NASDAQ				NYSE				AMEX				OTC			
Sell	Buy	Net	%	Sell	Buy	Net	%	Sell	Buy	Net	%	Sell	Buy	Net	%	Sell	Buy	Net	%				
ADVERTISING MANAGERS LTD																							
ADVERTISING TRUST																							
General Inc	16.10	17.40	+0.80	0.22																			
General Inc	23.40	24.40	+0.20	2.10																			
General Inc	20.00	20.40	+0.20	0.30																			
General Inc	22.00	22.40	+0.20	0.30																			
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AIA REALTY & LAND UNIT TRUSTS																							
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General Inc	32.30	32.90	+0.20	0.20																			
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CONCRETE

Concrete is a composite material made of cement, sand, and aggregate. It is a strong and durable material used in construction.

BRICKS

Bricks are made of clay and fired in a kiln. They are used in masonry work.

ROOFING

Roofing is the process of covering a roof with a waterproof material. It is an essential part of construction.

PAINTS

Paints are used to protect and decorate surfaces. They come in various colors and finishes.

WALLS

Walls are vertical structures that support a roof or ceiling. They are made of various materials like brick, concrete, or stone.

FLOORS

Floors are horizontal surfaces that support the weight of the building. They are made of materials like wood, concrete, or tile.

CEILING

Ceiling is the upper interior surface of a room. It is often made of plaster or wood.

DOORS

Doors are openings in a wall that can be opened and closed. They are used for entry and exit.

WINDOWS

Windows are openings in a wall that allow light and air to enter a room. They are often made of glass.

STAIRS

Stairs are a series of steps that allow people to move between different levels of a building.

ELEVATORS

Elevators are machines that transport people and goods between different floors of a building.

PLUMBING

Plumbing is the system of pipes and fixtures that supply water and remove waste from a building.

ELECTRICITY

Electricity is a form of energy that is used to power buildings and appliances.

HEATING

Heating is the process of warming a space. It can be done using various methods like radiators or furnaces.

Cooling

Cooling is the process of lowering the temperature of a space. It can be done using air conditioning or fans.

INSULATION

Insulation is a material that is used to reduce heat loss or gain. It is important for energy efficiency.

VENTILATION

Ventilation is the process of exchanging indoor air with outdoor air. It helps to improve air quality.

Lighting

Lighting is the use of artificial light to illuminate a space. It is essential for safety and comfort.

Acoustics

Acoustics is the study of sound. It is important for designing spaces that have good sound quality.

Structural Analysis

Structural analysis is the process of determining the strength and stability of a building. It is a critical part of construction.

Foundation

Foundation is the base of a building that supports its weight. It is made of concrete or other strong materials.

Roof Structure

Roof structure is the framework that supports the roof. It is made of wood, steel, or other materials.

Interior Design

Interior design is the process of creating a functional and aesthetically pleasing interior space. It involves choosing colors, furniture, and lighting.

Exterior Design

Exterior design is the process of creating a functional and aesthetically pleasing exterior space. It involves choosing materials, landscaping, and lighting.

Construction Management

Construction management is the process of overseeing the construction of a building. It involves coordinating the work of different trades and ensuring that the project is completed on time and within budget.

Architectural Drawing

Architectural drawing is the process of creating a visual representation of a building. It includes floor plans, elevations, and sections.

Building Codes

Building codes are rules that govern the construction of buildings. They are designed to ensure safety and quality.

Permits

Permits are official approvals that are required for certain types of construction work. They are issued by local government agencies.

Insurance

Insurance is a contract that provides financial protection against loss or damage. It is an important part of any construction project.

Contracts

Contracts are legal agreements that define the terms of a construction project. They are essential for protecting the interests of all parties involved.

Quality Control

Quality control is the process of ensuring that a building meets certain standards. It involves inspecting the work and making corrections as needed.

Safety

Safety is the most important aspect of construction. It involves taking steps to prevent accidents and injuries.

Environment

Environment is the natural world around us. It is important to consider the impact of construction on the environment.

Sustainability

Sustainability is the ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is a goal for many construction projects.

Green Building

Green building is the process of creating a building that is environmentally friendly. It involves using sustainable materials and practices.

Smart Building

Smart building is a building that uses technology to improve its efficiency and performance. It can include things like smart lighting and climate control systems.

Cloud Computing

Cloud computing is the use of remote servers to store and manage data. It is a popular way to store and access information.

Mobile Apps

Mobile apps are software programs that are designed to run on mobile devices like smartphones and tablets. They can be used for a variety of purposes, from entertainment to productivity.

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence is the simulation of human intelligence in machines. It is a rapidly growing field with many applications in construction.

Big Data

Big data is a large volume of data that is difficult to manage and analyze. It is often used in construction to track project progress and identify trends.

Blockchain

Blockchain is a distributed ledger technology that can be used to secure transactions and data. It is a promising technology for construction.

Internet of Things

Internet of Things (IoT) is the network of physical objects that are connected to the internet. It can be used to monitor and control building systems.

Augmented Reality

Augmented reality is the combination of the real world with digital information. It can be used in construction for training and visualization.

Virtual Reality

Virtual reality is a simulated environment that can be experienced through a computer. It is often used in construction for training and design.

3D Printing

3D printing is the process of creating a three-dimensional object from a digital file. It is a revolutionary technology that has many applications in construction.

Drone Technology

Drone technology is the use of unmanned aircraft for various purposes. In construction, it can be used for site inspection and data collection.

Robotics

Robotics is the study of robots and their applications. In construction, robots can be used for tasks like welding and painting.

Automation

Automation is the use of technology to perform tasks without human intervention. It is a key trend in construction.

Cloud Storage

Cloud storage is the storage of data on remote servers. It is a convenient way to store and access files.

Mobile Devices

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Futures drive shares sharply lower

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place ten business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1994/95		1993/94		1992/93		1991/92		1990/91		1989/90		1988/89		1987/88		1986/87		1985/86		1984/85		1983/84		1982/83		1981/82		1980/81		1979/80		1978/79		1977/78		1976/77		1975/76		1974/75		1973/74		1972/73		1971/72		1970/71		1969/70		1968/69		1967/68		1966/67		1965/66		1964/65		1963/64		1962/63		1961/62		1960/61		1959/60		1958/59		1957/58		1956/57		1955/56		1954/55		1953/54		1952/53		1951/52		1950/51		1949/50		1948/49		1947/48		1946/47		1945/46		1944/45		1943/44		1942/43		1941/42		1940/41		1939/40		1938/39		1937/38		1936/37		1935/36		1934/35		1933/34		1932/33		1931/32		1930/31		1929/30		1928/29		1927/28		1926/27		1925/26		1924/25		1923/24		1922/23		1921/22		1920/21		1919/20		1918/19		1917/18		1916/17		1915/16		1914/15		1913/14		1912/13		1911/12		1910/11		1909/10		1908/09		1907/08		1906/07		1905/06		1904/05		1903/04		1902/03		1901/02		1900/01		1899/00		1898/99		1897/98		1896/97		1895/96		1894/95		1893/94		1892/93		1891/92		1890/91		1889/90		1888/89		1887/88		1886/87		1885/86		1884/85		1883/84		1882/83		1881/82		1880/81		1879/80		1878/79		1877/78		1876/77		1875/76		1874/75		1873/74		1872/73		1871/72		1870/71		1869/70		1868/69		1867/68		1866/67		1865/66		1864/65		1863/64		1862/63		1861/62		1860/61		1859/60		1858/59		1857/58		1856/57		1855/56		1854/55		1853/54		1852/53		1851/52		1850/51		1849/50		1848/49		1847/48		1846/47		1845/46		1844/45		1843/44		1842/43		1841/42		1840/41		1839/40		1838/39		1837/38		1836/37		1835/36		1834/35		1833/34		1832/33		1831/32		1830/31		1829/30		1828/29		1827/28		1826/27		1825/26		1824/25		1823/24		1822/23		1821/22		1820/21		1819/20		1818/19		1817/18		1816/17		1815/16		1814/15		1813/14		1812/13		1811/12		1810/11		1809/10		1808/09		1807/08		1806/07		1805/06		1804/05		1803/04		1802/03		1801/02		1800/01		1799/00		1798/99		1797/98		1796/97		1795/96		1794/95		1793/94		1792/93		1791/92		1790/91		1789/90		1788/89		1787/88		1786/87		1785/86		1784/85		1783/84		1782/83		1781/82		1780/81		1779/80		1778/79		1777/78		1776/77		1775/76		1774/75		1773/74		1772/73		1771/72		1770/71		1769/70		1768/69		1767/68		1766/67		1765/66		1764/65		1763/64		1762/63		1761/62		1760/61		1759/60		1758/59		1757/58		1756/57		1755/56		1754/55		1753/54		1752/53		1751/52		1750/51		1749/50		1748/49		1747/48		1746/47		1745/46		1744/45		1743/44		1742/43		1741/42		1740/41		1739/40		1738/39		1737/38		1736/37		1735/36		1734/35		1733/34		1732/33		1731/32		1730/31		1729/30		1728/29		1727/28		1726/27		1725/26		1724/25		1723/24		1722/23		1721/22		1720/21		1719/20		1718/19		1717/18		1716/17		1715/16		1714/15		1713/14		1712/13		1711/12		1710/11		1709/10		1708/09		1707/08		1706/07		1705/06		1704/05		1703/04		1702/03		1701/02		1700/01		1699/00		1698/99		1697/98		1696/97		1695/96		1694/95		1693/94		1692/93		1691/92		1690/91		1689/90		1688/89		1687/88		1686/87		1685/86		1684/85		1683/84		1682/83		1681/82		1680/81		1679/80		1678/79		1677/78		1676/77		1675/76		1674/75		1673/74		1672/73		1671/72		1670/71		1669/70		1668/69		1667/68		1666/67		1665/66		1664/65		1663/64		1662/63		1661/62		1660/61		1659/60		1658/59		1657/58		1656/57		1655/56		1654/55		1653/54		1652/53		1651/52		1650/51		1649/50		1648/49		1647/48		1646/47		1645/46		1644/45		1643/44		1642/43		1641/42		1640/41		1639/40		1638/39		1637/38		1636/37		1635/36		1634/35		1633/34		1632/33		1631/32		1630/31		1629/30		1628/29		1627/28		1626/27		1625/26		1624/25		1623/24		1622/23		1621/22		1620/21		1619/20		1618/19		1617/18		1616/17		1615/16		1614/15		1613/14		1612/13		1611/12		1610/11		1609/10		1608/09		1607/08		1606/07		1605/06		1604/05		1603/04		1602/03		1601/02		1600/01		1599/00		1598/99		1597/98		1596/97		1595/96		1594/95		1593/94		1592/93		1591/92		1590/91		1589/90		1588/89		1587/88		1586/87		1585/86		1584/85		1583/84		1582/83		1581/82		1580/81		1579/80		1578/79		1577/78		1576/77		1575/76		1574/75		1573/74		1572/73		1571/72		1570/71		1569/70		1568/69		1567/68		1566/67		1565/66		1564/65		1563/64		1562/63		1561/62		1560/61		1559/60		1558/59		1557/58		1556/57		1555/56		1554/55		1553/54		1552/53		1551/52		1550/51		1549/50		1548/49		1547/48		1546/47		1545/46		1544/45		1543/44		1542/43		1541/42		1540/41		1539/40		1538/39		1537/38		1536/37		1535/36		1534/35		1533/34		1532/33		1531/32		1530/31		1529/30		1528/29		1527/28		1526/27		1525/26		1524/25		1523/24		1522/23		1521/22		1520/21		1519/20		1518/19		1517/18		1516/17		1515/16		1514/15		1513/14		1512/13		1511/12		1510/11		1509/10		1508/09		1507/08		1506/07		1505/06		1504/05		1503/04		1502/03		1501/02		1500/01		1499/00		1498/99		1497/98		1496/97		1495/96		1494/95		1493/94		1492/93		1491/92		1490/91		1489/90		1488/89		1487/88		1486/87		1485/86		1484/85		1483/84		1482/83		1481/82		1480/81		1479/80		1478/79		1477/78		1476/77		1475/76		1474/75		1473/74		1472/73		1471/72		1470/71		1469/70		1468/69		1467/68		1466/67		1465/66		1464/65		1463/64		1462/63		1461/62		1460/61		1459/60		1458/59		1457/58		1456/57		1455/56		1454/55		1453/54		1452/53		1451/52		1450/51		1449/50		1448/49		1447/48		1446/47		1445/46		1444/45		1443/44		1442/43		1441/42		1440/41		1439/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THE TIMES Four weddings and a Caribbean honeymoon

To celebrate the release on video of the much-acclaimed *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, over the next four weeks *The Times* will be giving four couples the chance to win a fabulous honeymoon in the Caribbean, courtesy of the specialist tour operator Caribbean Connection.

Each winning couple will also receive an elegant Pronuptia bridal

dress worth £600, plus suit hire for the groom; a pair of gold wedding rings together worth £300 from Mappin & Webb; and a case of Cordon Rouge champagne from the House of Mumm.

Two hundred runners-up will receive a copy of the video of *Four Weddings and a Funeral*; another 50 readers will receive copies of the film's soundtrack.



Top destination: the Coral Reef Club in Barbados

A time to remember

EACH of the four weeks of the competition will highlight a different idyllic destination, with honeymoons to be won in Barbados, St Lucia, Antigua and Grenada.

Caribbean Connection will offer winning couples a seven-night stay with bed and breakfast in luxurious hotel accommodation. In Barbados the winners will stay at the Coral Reef Club, which has two tennis courts, water sports, a beach bar and full programme of entertainment.

Caribbean Connection offers the most extensive range of luxury hotels, villas and yachts in the region, along with more than 20 years of experience. The company has a department specialising in arrangements for couples wanting to get married abroad and many of their hotels offer exclusive wedding and honeymoon packages.

As a special offer to readers, Caribbean Connection will reduce by £200 per couple the cost of an island honeymoon taken before November 30, 1995. For further information phone 01244 341131.

Four lucky brides will choose the dress of their dreams, to a value of £600, from wedding attire specialists Pronuptia Youngs. Their nationwide range of stores offers exclusive collections by Jeff Banks and Laura Ashley side by side with their own label. Grooms will be able to choose their wedding suit from Youngs Formal Wear.

Mappin & Webb, who are giving away our wedding rings, offer a wide range of traditional and contemporary jewellery. For details of your nearest Mappin & Webb branch, and a copy of their ring catalogue, phone 0171 409 3377.

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For your chance to win one of four dream honeymoons in the Caribbean simply collect any four of the eight tokens which will appear in *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* over the next four weeks.

Token one appears below and your second token will appear in *The Sunday Times*.



Token One

tomorrow. Send them with your name and address to: *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, 5 Britons Court, EC8B 6NG.

The winners and their honeymoon destinations will be selected at random from all correct entries received by the closing date of May 6 1995.

Four Weddings and a Funeral attracted huge audiences in both Britain and America.

Now it is being released by Polygram Video at £14.99 - but for five weeks only. After April 30, stocks will be withdrawn until a second release in the autumn.



London Marathon offers Briton chance to restore fortunes after injury

McColgan aims to halt Dorre's run

By DAVID POWELL
ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

WHEN Damon Hill waves his starter's flag to commence the NutraSweet London Marathon tomorrow, it may strike him as ironic that a Briton and a German will be the focus of attention. While Hill and Schumacher take a weekend off from Formula One, television will turn its eyes on Liz McColgan and Kathryn Dorre. Hill will send the elite women's race away at 9am, followed by the men's elite start, and the mass field at 9.30. The separation will ensure that the climax of the women's event is reached down The Mall some ten minutes before the men's. A British winner is not expected.

Dorre, champion for the last three years, is the favourite but McColgan has been insisting this week that she is ready to make a race of it. After two years in the international wilderness because of various injuries, McColgan is desperate

to prove that she is not yesterday's runner.

Should Dorre succeed, she would become the first athlete, man or woman, to win four successive London titles. She believes only McColgan or Manuela Machado, of Portugal, the European champion, have even the slightest chance of stopping her. The last woman representing Britain to win in London was the French-born Veronique Martot, in 1989.

Dorre will not worry if McColgan and Machado, renowned front runners, disappear into the distance. When Dorre won in 1993, McColgan and Lisa Ondieki paid the price of an early pace that left the German, a patient competitor, almost a minute behind at one stage.

The best British men, Eamonn Martin and Paul Evans, sounded hopeful yesterday but, such is the quality of the field assembled by David Bedford, the elite race director, that there can be no



IN ASSOCIATION WITH BUPA

Only in *The Times* next week: the complete list of London Marathon finishers

accusation of engineering a home victory. With Dionicio Cerón, Steve Monaghan and Antonio Pinto present, the bookmakers' odds on Evans (25-1) and Martin (33-1) seem about right.

"I have taken the view that we should have fewer elite athletes but of a higher class," Bedford said. "At one time we had 120 to 130 and 50 to 60 women. We have reduced that to 55 and 15. Our elite budget remains £1 million."

While the backmarkers in the 25,000 field will be travelling through East London no quicker than Ronnie Kray's funeral cortege did on Wednesday, Cerón and Monaghan will be moving at close to world-record pace. How close depends on the weather and, with westerly winds forecast, thoughts of a fast time may have to give way to sensible racing.

No man has won London twice but now Cerón, Pinto and Martin have a chance. Cerón, from Mexico, the victor last year, said that, in good conditions, he thought he could run inside Belayneh Dinsamo's world mark of 2hr 06min 50sec. Monaghan, from Australia, the Commonwealth champion, thought he might manage 2hr 07min 30sec. Pinto was having none of this. "I shall follow them with a sack and put them in as I go past," he said.

A Portuguese double is not inconceivable. Pinto, like Machado, should be well placed

to take advantage should the favourites fail. Pinto, the 1992 London winner, won in Berlin last autumn in 2hr 08min 31sec.

Although Britain has enjoyed some successes in the Nineties - London wins for Allister Hutton (1990) and Martin (1993) and a World Cup victory for Richard Neerukar (1993) - no British athlete since Tony Milroy, in 1989, has broken 2hr 10min. Martin said yesterday that he was ready to run a "significant personal best". His fastest is 2hr 10min 50sec. Aged 36, he is aiming to become London's oldest male winner. Not that age should concern him: Carlos Lopes set a world best of 2hr 07min 12sec at 38.

Evans has failed to finish three of his seven marathons but can joke about it. Discussing his easy training week before the race, he said: "I will probably do about 20 miles in the week of the race and that includes the race." Again he

plans to go with the pace, hoping not to buckle as he did in the world championships.

After his European half-marathon best of 60min 09sec, Evans is confident. He is also motivated by the comment made by Malcolm Arnold, the Great Britain chief coach, that he resembled a carhorse. "It was like a red rag to a bull," Evans said yesterday. "Every time I run well, I think 'not bad for a carhorse'."

London's course records have stood for ten years. Ingrid Kristiansen's 2hr 21min 06sec is not under threat but Steve Jones's 2hr 08min 16sec bonus has been doubled from last year, to \$100,000 (about £66,000).

Others to the fore should include Willie Mtolo, of South Africa. You can pick out Mtolo from two three-inch scars on each cheek, marks of a Zulu tradition. For a typically British distinguishing mark, look for Evans's Tottenham Hotspur tattoo.

Marathoners borne along by memories

Andrew Longmore tries to keep up with an elite group of long-distance runners as they retrace past triumphs and disappointments

I had gone through the pain barrier over the apple pie and hit the wall by coffee time. Just listening made my knees ache and my mind numb. But, on they went, the marathon men, tramping into the dawn, reminiscing a little, arguing a lot, their tongues doing the talking now that their legs had, for the most part, given way.

Each member of the Super 17, the finest group of British marathon runners ever assembled, has more miles on the clock than a sales rep's car and a reunion dinner two nights before the NutraSweet London Marathon provided the ideal excuse to trade memories.

It was shop talk mainly, spoken in a common language of hours and minutes. These were men who have lived their lives by the clock for once not having to count the seconds. Medal-winners or world record-holders every one. Ron Hill, Ian Thompson, Charlie Spedding and Mike Graton. When Chris Brasher, the chairman of the club, stood to toast the group's two world record-holders - Steve Jones and Jim Peters - two more hands shot up, those of Basil Heatley and Jim Alder, also world record-holders in their time. Brasher gave up in the end and toasted everyone.

But only one man receives an unspoken toast every year. Jack Holden is 88 and walks with a stick, but his memory is

as sharp as his Midlands accent and his fund of stories, limitless.

Holden ran the last ten miles barefoot to win gold in the British Empire Games in Auckland in 1950 and beat off a Great Dane in the closing stages. Because his white running shorts - "always wore spottier white, you know, to lighten my opponents" - were spattered with blood, everyone presumed he had been bitten. But the blood was from his feet.

"Cut to ribbons they were," he said. "I knew when I went out to the Games I needed a new pair of shoes, but you couldn't break in a new pair in a race, so I used the old ones. After a few miles, there was a torrential downpour and they just fell apart, my feet kept slipping off the soles. I thought about asking one of the spectators for a handkerchief to tie the soles back on, but I was worried about being disqualified, so I just threw them away."

Holden, a groundsman by trade, had to pick his way across a road resurfaced with chippings before he reached the line in 2hr 32min 15sec. He recovered his shoes, though, and presented them to the couple who had been his hosts during the Games and he kept running until, at the age of 70, he found he no longer had the strength to combat a fierce wind on the seaford at Weston-Super-Mare. "That was it,"



Indulging in a gentle jog down memory lane at their reunion are marathoners, from left, back row: Basil Heatley, Jim Hogan, Steve Jones, Charlie Spedding, Bill Adcock. Middle row: Don Faircloth, Ron Hill, Ian Thompson, Jim Alder, Jim Peters, Brian Kilby. Front row: Joyce Smith, Jack Holden, Peter Wilkinson.

he said. "Packed it in there and then."

Then there was Alder, running so fast through the Jamaican dawn in the 1966 Commonwealth Games that he surprised officials at the stadium, who sent him round the car park. Second-placed man, Bill Adcock, was already into the stadium and heading for the finish by the time Alder was rerouted. "It was the royal party's fault. They had just arrived and the officials were all too busy worrying about them," Alder said. He won anyway.

And the Irishman, Jim Hogan, European champion

turned professional punter - "only small sums, mind" - stopping off en route from Worcester races to Huntingdon to recount the day he chased Abebe Bikila in the 1964 Olympic marathon in Tokyo and had to pull out after 35 kilometres, the ultimate insult for a marathon man. He was taken back to the hotel on a stretcher.

Inevitably, talk turned to old versus new. "Our favourite topic," as Charlie Spedding called it. The demise of British long-distance running, lack of commitment, shortage of top-class competition, fear and money. Too much money.

"Jim, what was the best prize you won," Alder was asked. "A little oak table. A beauty it is, still got it. But I won so many pen-and-pencil sets I didn't know what to do with them all. Now they're so busy chasing for the money they forget about the medals."

An eloquent defence was mounted by Jones, who earned enough from his career to live and train in Colorado these days. "You have to be full-time now and that's expensive." "Rubbish," shouted the bricklayer, Alder. "If you win medals, the money will pour in." "Oh yes?" queried the Olympic bronze medal-winner and pharmacist, Spedding, wondering where he had gone wrong.

Consensus did emerge finally, fuelled by wine and brandy, and a letter drawn up for the attention of the officers of the British Athletic Federation, which stressed their concern at the decline in the standard of British distance running and the lack of focus on winning medals. What they all utterly and touchingly failed to grasp was that great marathon runners cannot be groomed or bought. They are unique. A glance around the table would have shown them that.

Cannock ready for three-way charge

By SYDNEY FRISKIN

THE National Hockey League championship could be decided on goal difference in the tightest finish since its inception in 1985 if the three teams in the running - Teddington, Cannock and Reading - finish their weekend fixtures with victories.

Cannock, who are six goals better off than Teddington and 12 ahead of Reading, are at home today to Havant, the champions last year, who have had a disappointing season. Havant will be without the injured Williams and Faulkner and will also miss Rowlands, their first-choice goalkeeper, and Taylor, the half back, both being unavailable. They still have enough talent, however, to upset the odds.

Cannock's remaining match will be tomorrow against Firebrands, who are fighting relegation and will rely on the England goalkeeper, Mason. Failure by Cannock to secure full points from the two matches will leave Teddington in a position to take the title, provided they are successful in their trip to East Grinstead, who, although having no chance themselves, will try for a better position than eighth, which they now hold.

Teddington have, in recent weeks, relied mainly on Billson and McGuire to get the goals, both having come to the rescue in a crisis.

McGuire, a member of England's World Cup team in Australia, has scored 16 goals from penalty strokes and short corners.

Reading are at home today to Old Loughtonians, holding ninth position and not playing particularly well without Halls, who is in Australia. Reading, who need to win to retain a chance, will be on a trip tomorrow to Stourport, where they can expect stiff opposition with Imran Sherwazi and Knot still searching for goals.

Guildford, who complete

TOP OF THE TABLE									
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts		
Teddington	16	12	1	3	46	23	37		
Cannock	15	10	4	1	46	17	34		
Guildford	16	11	1	4	52	27	34		
Reading	15	11	1	3	54	17	34		

their fixtures tomorrow with a visit to Trojans, will expect Jennings to add to his 18 goals, which have put him at the top of the list of leading scorers.

At best, Southgate can achieve respectability if they manage an away win against Old Loughtonians.

The result of the second division match between Doncaster and Barford Tigers will decide who accompanies St Albans to the first division next season. Doncaster need to win a draw will do for Barford Tigers.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Your partner opens 1NT (12-14). You hold:

(A) ♠98762 ♠AK872 ♦75 ♣10

(B) ♠KQJ97 ♠AQ654 ♦Q3 ♣10

What would you bid? When the first of these hands occurred in the Crans-sur-Sierre Pairs tournament, this was the full deal:

Dealer North East West game Match pointed pairs

♠A5 ♠1098 ♠AKJ4

♥A94 ♠A9842 ♠KJ4

♦Q103 ♠N ♠Q6 ♠KQ1063

♥J43 ♠W ♠E ♠K53

♠982 ♠S ♠KJ4

♠98762 ♠AK872

♦75 ♠KQ1063

♠10 ♠K53

♠KJ4

♠Q6

♠KQ1063

♠K53

♠KJ4

♠Q6

♠KQ1063

♠K53

♠KJ4

♠Q6

♠KQ1063

♠K53

♠KJ4

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♠KJ4

♠Q6

♠KQ1063

♠K53

♠KJ4

♠Q6

♠KQ1063

♠K53

♠KJ4

♠Q6

♠KQ1063

♠K53

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Final Tribute

Today I round off my tribute to Sir Stuart Milner-Barry who died last weekend. The first of the two games sees a fine attacking performance from Sir Stuart, while in the second he demonstrates fine technique to breach his opponent's defences in an equal-looking endgame.

White: Tylor
Black: Sir Stuart Milner-Barry
Hastings 1938

Four Knights Game

1 e4 e5

2 Nf3 Nc6

3 Nc3 Nf6

4 Bb5 Nd4

5 Bc4 Bc5

6 Nbd2 O-O

7 Nc3 Bb6

8 Bb3

9 Nf5

10 e3

11 Nc3

12 Bc2

13 O-O

14 Bb3

15 Bc4

16 Bc2

17 Rf1

18 Bc1

19 Nc4

20 Nd2

21 Bc2

22 Nf7

23 Bc3

24 Bc2

25 g3

26 h4

27 Bc3

28 Ng2

29 d4

30 Rf3

31 cxd4

32 Bb1

33 Kh1

34 Na4

35 Ng5

36 Rf5

37 Rf5+

38 Rf6

39 Rf6

40 Bb4

41 Kg1

42 Kh1

43 Kg1

44 Kg1

45 Kg1

46 Kg1

47 Kg1

48 Kg1

49 Kg1

50 Kg1

51 Kg1

52 Kg1

53 Kg1

54 Kg1

55 Kg1

56 Kg1

57 Kg1

58 Kg1

59 Kg1

60 Kg1

61 Kg

Bolton's teamwork to be tested in Coca-Cola Cup Final

Rush goals ignite fire at Anfield

By Peter Ball

THERE are few honours that have escaped Ian Rush in his distinguished career. Tomorrow, he will cross another off the list when he leads Liverpool out at Wembley for the first time in the Coca-Cola Cup Final against Bolton Wanderers.

It will be Bolton's first significant cup final since 1958, but in the Eighties, Wembley almost became known as Liverpool's other home ground. Few felt more at home there than Rush, who twice scored two goals in FA Cup Finals, both against Everton.

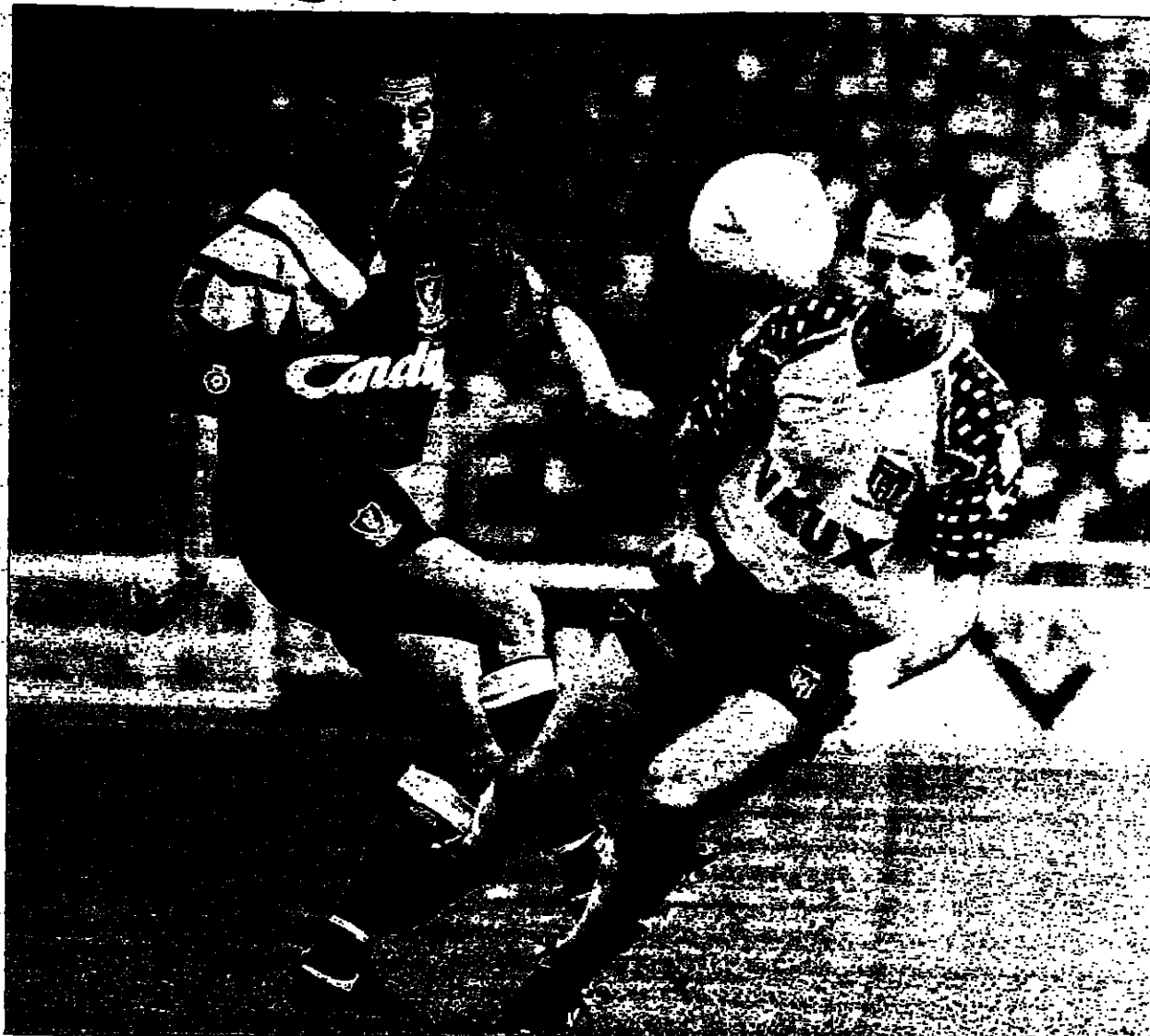
With six goals on the way to Wembley this season, including the hat-trick at Ewood Park which ended the ambitions of Blackburn Rovers, the Coca-Cola Cup has stirred Rush's interest this season. If, tomorrow afternoon, he can repeat the feat of scoring two goals in finals, he will equal Geoff Hurst's record of 49 goals in the competition, and the cup may be on his way back to its familiar place in the Anfield trophy room, giving Roy Evans a successful first trip to Wembley as manager.

The man charged with stopping Rush and Robbie Fowler, who has scored four times in the competition so far, is Alan Stubbs, the captain of Bolton, who was a disconsolate spectator wearing the blue of Everton on both occasions that Rush scored his two goals.

Stubbs and Jason McAteer, his fellow Merseysider, were the subject of a Liverpool joint bid of £6 million at the beginning of the season. That bid was rejected by Bolton — "I didn't think that £6 million was enough for Stubbs," Bruce Rioch, the Bolton manager, joked this week. Instead, Liverpool bought Phil Babb, who was once awarded a free transfer by Rioch for breaking curfew in his days at Millwall.

If that leaves the opposing central defenders with points to prove, the wingers placed on Stubbs and McAteer indicates that Bolton have players capable of holding their own on a big stage. As well as Stubbs and McAteer, Alan Thompson would also not look out of place at a higher level, while John McGinlay and Miku Paatelainen, the strikers, have played international football this season.

That should ensure that, unlike Sunderland, another



Rush in action in his previous Wembley final, when Liverpool beat Sunderland 2-0 to lift the FA Cup in 1992

Endsleigh League team and Liverpool's previous opponents (apart from in the Charity Shield) at Wembley — in a disappointing FA Cup Final in 1992 — Bolton will not be overawed, even if Liverpool will start as favourites.

Bolton's win at Anfield in the FA Cup three years ago will also warn Liverpool not to take anything for granted.

"I'm a fan of Bolton Wanderers. I like the way they play their football," Evans said yesterday. "If the game fulfils its promise, it could be a classic."

Like Liverpool, Bolton are a footballing team. "Bolton are a bit like us, they perform well when they perform as a team," Evans said. "When they start getting individual, then, just like us at Liverpool, they don't play as well. What Bruce

WEMBLEY DETAILS

BOLTON WANDERERS

Probable — 4-4-2
K Baranjan — S Green, M Seagraves, A Stubbs, J Phillips — D Lee (or J McGinlay), J McAteer (or M Patterson), R Sneekes, A Thompson — J McGinlay, M Paatelainen.

PATH TO WEMBLEY: Second round: First leg: Ipswich Town (H) 3-0 (McGinlay, Thompson); second leg: 1-0 (Sneekes); 4-0 on aggregate. Third round: Sheffield United (H) 2-1 (Patterson, cp); fourth round: West Ham (H) 3-1 (McGinlay, 2 last); fifth round: Norwich City (H) 1-0 (Lee); semi-final: First leg: Sunderland (A) 1-2 (Stubbs); second leg: 3-1 (McAteer, Paatelainen, McGinlay); 4-3 on aggregate.

LIVERPOOL

Probable — 3-5-2
D James — S Skates, N Ruddock, P Babb, R Jones, S MacKenzie — J Barnes, S Smyth (or M Walters) — I Rush, R Fowler.

PATH TO WEMBLEY: Second round: First leg: Burnley (H) 2-0 (Skates, Fowler); second leg: 4-1 (Ruddock, 2, Fowler, Clough); 6-1 on aggregate. Third round: Stoke City (H) 2-1 (Fowler, 2); fourth round: Blackburn Rovers (H) 3-1 (Rush, 3); fifth round: Arsenal (H) 1-0 (Rush); semi-final: First leg: Crystal Palace (H) 1-0 (Fowler); second leg: 1-0 (Fowler); 2-0 on aggregate.

[Rioch] has built his side round is the team playing as a team."

For all the verve of McAteer, the skills of Thompson and the polish of Stubbs, Bolton's hopes of causing an upset will depend on everyone in the team making important con-

tributions. The ability of Lee, if he plays, to exploit doubts about the left side of the Liverpool defence, of Sneekes and Patterson, if he plays, to contain Barnes and Redknapp will be vital to Bolton's chances, as will the ability of Paatelainen and McGinlay to

find spaces either side of Ruddock. After quiet periods in mid season, Sneekes has recovered impressive form, and if he or McAteer can impose themselves on Barnes, Bolton's chances will be worth considering. That may be easier said than done.

So, Bolton's fate against one of the Premiership's leading sides tomorrow depends on the team effort, while their hopes for the future may depend on keeping McAteer, Stubbs and, most important, Rioch. That could come down to their success in ensuring that meeting Liverpool next season does not depend on the vagaries of cup fortune.

The winners tomorrow are guaranteed European football next season; for Bolton, progress in the league is even more important.

Hardaker heirs ensure the memory lives on



ROB HUGHES
Weekend View

Many people talk of leaving something for their grandchildren to remember them by. Tomorrow, among 80,000 people at Wembley Stadium, the late Alan Hardaker will be represented by two granddaughters in the official presentations that follow the Coca-Cola Cup final. It is his cup and, though he always said he was never interested in monuments, the event has reached its 34th year despite the attempts by senior clubs to kill it at birth.

"It's a joke, it will never get off the ground, it will be buried inside three years," was typical of the cynicism that greeted "Hardaker's folly".

This weekend, when Carol Wilkinson, one of Hardaker's 11 grandchildren, presents the Player of the Match trophy, "the Alan Hardaker Trophy", she will stand beside Sir Stanley Matthews, that other Lancastrian, who will present the Coca-Cola Cup, to which Hardaker declined to put his name. The audience will reach 60 countries. The number of spectators in the stadium will take the total over three decades close to 60 million paying customers and, from the old administrator's point of view, £120 million has now been gathered by his creation. Some folly.

And when the two sisters, Carol, 20, a physical education student and Susan, 23, like Hardaker a civil servant, take their seats, it will be in Row D of the Royal Box. "I watched last season when grandpa's trophy was being handed to a player by somebody I didn't know," Carol explained. "I decided to write to the League, telling them I would love to do it — for grandpa and for myself."

Hardaker to the end: and the League never could resist a Hardaker. In fact the woman who presented last year's award, Penny Hughes, was rather important to the competition in her own right. She is president of the sponsor, Coca-Cola Great Britain.

Carol is less than apologetic. Her personality can be as blunt as, if less acerbic than, her grandpa. She intends to meet as many players and officials as she can. "Some, like Robbie Fowler and Jamie Redknapp, are even younger than me... they probably don't even know who grandpa was." She used to play foot-

ball, a vigorous half back in her school team, though denied the opportunity of playing against other schools who did not go for girls on the field. And, though she will try to present herself as neutral, Liverpool was her team when she avidly followed the professional game, Peter Beardsley her idol, John Barnes not far behind.

Whoever meets her in the banquet hall at Wembley, or on the Football League coach that takes the personnel down from Lytham St Annes today, had better refrain from disparaging Alan Hardaker.

One noted person in the game did that some time ago to Susan. "He called grandpa a plonker," recalls the elder sister. "I was stuck for words. I'll probably take plenty of tissues to Wembley, because all the memories that will flood in will affect me. But our Carol is never on the defensive, she's really quick with words, and anyone who says anything bad about grandpa will get an earful."

Their mother, Janet, one of four daughters of the old "Lytham dictator" smiles at the image of attrition that has lingered so long after his death 15 years ago. He had joked, time and again, that he had been a failure in life: that having four daughters torpedoed his intention to breed a half back line for the club for

which he played as an amateur Hull City.

And in the warmth of their family home at Fleetwood, north of Blackpool, one can feel the softer side that Hardaker hid from his enemies. The girls remember his generosity. In the home that Hardaker kept across the forecourt from the League headquarters, the home to which he escaped after banging heads together in the name of the League, he would always be looking for as many of the grandchildren as would be there. He lured them with 11 glass jars in a cupboard in the kitchen: each week these contained 20p pocket money for each grandchild. But they had to come to collect it.

"Dad would be thrilled to bits to see Carol and Susan in the Royal Box," said Janet. "he might even forgive me for producing more girls."

Time, they say, mellows men. Perhaps it even mellows the memory of a man like Hardaker who, relishing a verbal spat with anyone, always considered himself to be on the side of the game. And when Janet's sister, Lesley, asked if Carol had arranged to present his trophy by ringing Jim'll Fix It, Janet responded: "No, she went higher than that. She went to the League." And, Carol admitted, it had to be a Dear Sir letter. She had not known the name of the secretary of the Football League.



Hardaker's granddaughters, Carol, left, and sister Susan. Carol will present Player of the Match trophy

Agassi gives US early advantage

ANDRE AGASSI beat Andre Gaudenzi to give the United States a 1-0 lead in their Davis Cup world group tennis quarter-final against Italy in Palermo yesterday. Agassi, the world No 2, won 6-4, 6-4, 6-1 in a match interrupted by rain for 90 minutes.

The rain returned to force postponement of the second singles match, pitting the world No 1, Pete Sampras, against Renzo Furlan. It was rescheduled for this morning. In Utrecht, Holland took a surprising 1-0 lead over Germany when Paul Haarhuis beat Boris Becker in straight sets but Michael Stich levelled the tie with a four-set victory over Richard Krajcek. Russia and South Africa shared the opening-day singles in Moscow while Sweden led Austria 1-0 in Vaxjo.

Doohan leads

Motorcycling: Michael Doohan took provisional pole position with a lap record during the first qualifying session for the 300cc Malaysian Grand Prix tomorrow.

Doohan raced his Repsol Honda round the Shah Alam track in a time of 1min. 25.05sec, breaking John Kocinski's 1991 record of 1:25.100.

Game pledge

Rugby league: Doncaster will fulfil their championship fixture at Bradford Northern tomorrow, despite reports of a players' boycott because of a disagreement over match payments by the administrators, who have agreed a purchase by Kingstock Holdings, owners of Doncaster's ground, Tony Fisher, the club's former coach, has succeeded Norman Smith, who has resigned as coach of Dewsbury. Karl Fairbank, Bradford's Great Britain forward, has been banned for two matches for a head-high tackle on Ellery Hanley, of Leeds, and David Stephenson, of Oldham, also for two games, for tripping Vaaiga Tuigamala, of Wigan.

Fortune favours Dalglish

By Peter Ball

THE news of Eric Cantona's reprieve from prison yesterday gave Manchester United a good start to the weekend. It will get even better if Everton can halt Blackburn Rovers' relentless march at Goodison Park this afternoon, which would enable United to go top by beating Leeds United at Old Trafford tomorrow.

A month ago, having hindered United by beating them 1-0 at Goodison, Everton, who still need points to keep clear of the bottom four, might have been fancied to help United by beating Blackburn. But, as well as maintaining imposing form, Blackburn are having that little bit of fortune champions get and they face an Everton side with five players missing through suspension, including Daniel Amokachi, the Nigerian forward, and Duncan Ferguson, the Scottish striker.

"Ferguson being out is helpful but it might not make our job any easier," Kenny Dalglish, the Blackburn manager, said yesterday. "Amokachi will come in and he has a point to prove." It will be Amokachi's first start since Everton greeted the arrival of their manager, Joe Royle with a 2-0 win over Liverpool in October.

Blackburn have their prob-

lems, too, with Jason Wilcox out and Graeme Le Saux and Alan Shearer facing late fitness tests. The loss of Shearer — "the best goalscorer in Europe," according to Richard Witschge, his new team-mate, and Royle — would be grievous.

So, not so long ago, would have been the loss of Wilcox and Le Saux, but Dalglish has strengthened his squad shrewdly and he now has more than adequate cover. Jeff Kenna made a satisfactory debut against Chelsea while Witschge, the Holland midfielder who is on loan from Bordeaux, could replace Wilcox with equal aplomb.

With the FA Carling Pre-



Amokachi: suspended

miership title as the prize, it could prove the signing of the season. Like all Dutch players, Witschge does not lack confidence or certainty. "Somebody called and asked me if I would like to play at Blackburn for two months," Witschge said yesterday. "I said: 'Yes, I would like to come here and win the English league.' Shades of Cantona, when he joined Leeds."

Leeds return to Old Trafford, where they lost in the FA Cup, with Tony Yeboah now established and scoring goals regularly. United will have Andy Cole, who missed that game, but are without Lee Sharpe and Steve Bruce, who are both suspended.

With Parker suffering a knock in training, making his return to action this season look problematic, Roy Keane plays at centre-half for only the second time in his United career.

At the other end of the table, West Ham United are without a match, which gives Crystal Palace and Southampton the chance to take an important step towards safety. Southampton play Tottenham Hotspur at The Dell tomorrow and Manchester City visit Crystal Palace today believing that a win will see them out of danger.

Bergara joins casualty list

By Russell Kempson

DANNY Bergara became the 41st managerial casualty this season when Stockport County, the Endsleigh Insurance League second division club, terminated his contract yesterday. Born in Uruguay, he was the first South American to manage in England, when he took over at Rochdale seven years ago. He succeeded Asa Hartford at Edgeley Park in April 1989.

Stockport reached Wembley four times under Bergara's guidance, losing twice in the Autoglass Trophy final and twice in end-of-season play-off finals. His tactical expertise and endearing linguistic mix of Spanish and English, often coarsely delivered, made him one of football's most colourful characters. However, Stock-

port have struggled in mid-table this season, unable to recover from the sale of Andy Preece and Kevin Francis, their leading goalscorers, and Bergara was dismissed after an alleged altercation with Brendan Elwood, the club chairman, at an evening function in the town on Wednesday. "Mr Bergara's position as manager has become untenable," a club statement said.

Bergara, who refused to comment on the claims, said: "It is sad news after six great years of continuous achievement and success, building great foundations at the club in most departments. I can hold my head high."

The future of Doncaster Rovers, of the third division, was still in the balance yesterday.

Rovers officials had threatened to resign from the Football League, if Doncaster council did not confirm its plans to relocate the club from its dilapidated Belle Vue ground, but Peter Welsh, leader of the local authority, said: "A formal decision over the matter would have to be agreed by a properly constituted committee of the council, which cannot possibly be convened at short notice."

Sunderland, the first division club, was fined £2,500 for fielding Dominic Matteo — an unregistered defender, on loan from Liverpool — in the 2-0 defeat against Barnsley. It had feared a points deduction. Oxford take on Cambridge in the University match at Craven Cottage today.

WE'RE BEHIND THE WINNERS.

Good luck to both crews from the auditors of Oxford and Cambridge Universities.

KPMG means business



Topolski aims to break spell

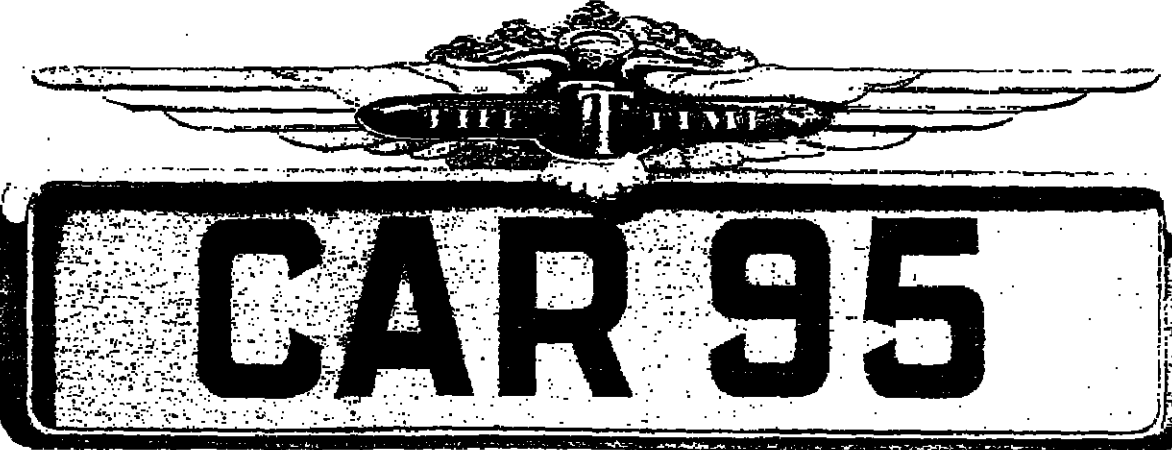
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FOOTBALL
RUSH TO
LEADER
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Tyred of life?
No need to
play the
damsel
in distress
Page 12



The ultimate
funmobile
blazes a
terrifying
trail
Page 3



SATURDAY APRIL 1 1995

'Buy a car, get one free' is part of the strategy of an unknown maker that hits Britain this weekend

Push-button sales at the auto gift shop

Kevin Eason on
the aggressive
Far Eastern firm
that is already
rocking the car
industry boat

The suspicious would believe the offer too good to be true on April Fool's Day: buy a car and get one free. The deal is real, though, and comes from the most ambitious Far Eastern carmaker to attack the British market.

Daewoo of South Korea opens for business today with what could be the most aggressive sales strategy ever seen in this country.

The company — which bills itself as the biggest you have never heard of — is spending £150 million to elbow its way between Ford, Vauxhall and Rover to make Britain one of its most important European markets. It starts with that radical offer which means the first 1,000 people to buy a Daewoo will be able to exchange their car on August 1 for a new N-registered Nexia or Espero model.

Customers can choose the colour, engine, shape and style of their cars at the touch of a button on a computer in one of Daewoo's new showrooms that abolish traditional dealers and hectoring salesmen.

David German, director of customer operations, says: "We want 1 per cent of the UK market by 1997 and that means we have to get the name known. We have had to be innovative and find ideas nobody has tried before."

Daewoo has two problems: nobody knows who it is, and its cars are effectively Korean versions of hand-me-down General Motors cars, the Nexia a derivative of the old version of the Vauxhall Astra and the Espero an attractive reworking of the Vauxhall Cavalier.

To raise the company's profile, the Koreans have bought the best talent in the industry and turned convention upside down.

There are no dealers and there is no haggling over price; what you see on the sticker is what you pay. The car is delivered without an extra charge — unlike the rest of the industry, which adds between £200 and £300 for delivery with number plates, a year's tax paid and a full tank of petrol.

Both models also have a three-year or 60,000-mile warranty, three years' free servicing, three years' AA breakdown cover and a free mobile telephone: all with cars that cost only £9,000-£12,000.

If that is not enough, Daewoo has taken a revolutionary step that every manufacturer in Europe will watch closely, because it could be a move towards smashing the industry structure built up over the past 100 years.

Instead of using established dealerships, Daewoo is setting up its own showrooms. The first two open today in Derby and Rotherham and set the pattern, located at out-of-town shopping areas, nesting between shops such as Do-It-All and a Comet warehouse. The showrooms display the complete nine-car range, with customers able to wander in from the shop next door with the family.

There are playrooms and coffee bars, and after selecting their car on the computer, which also lists finance deals, customers need not fear the hard sell. Sales staff are paid on salary, not commission, to take the heat out of making deals.

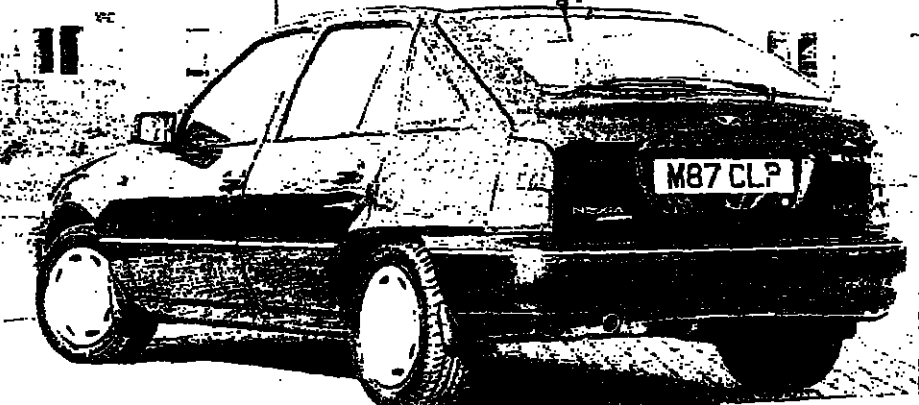
Pat Farrell, a former Rover executive and now Daewoo's marketing director, said: "We surveyed 200,000 motorists and discovered 63 per cent found showrooms intimidating places. We want to get rid of that feeling so people can choose what they want without pressure."

Service has also been radically changed. Customers book appointments through Daewoo's headquarters in Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, which locates the nearest service centre — not a Daewoo garage but one of 136 centres run by Halfords.

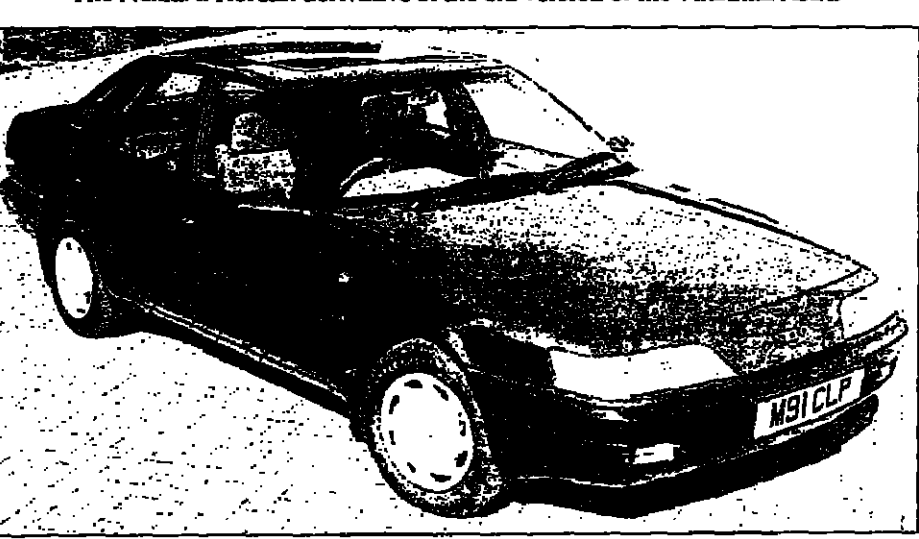
The link is unique, with Daewoo training Halfords mechanics but having its own staff on hand at each centre to communicate with its parts and technical centre in Watford. If this minor revolution works to plan, Daewoo will be selling 20,000 cars a year here within two years — more than Hyundai, Kia, Lada, Mazda, Mitsubishi, Proton, Seat, Skoda and Suzuki do now. Furthermore, this is not a company bound, like the Japanese, by import quotas. Daewoo can import as many cars as it can sell.



Buying by numbers: customers at the Daewoo showroom in Rotherham can make their choice of model and finance scheme on a touch-screen computer, while their children amuse themselves in the playroom



The Nexia: a Korean derivative of the old version of the Vauxhall Astra



The Espero: an attractive reworking of the Vauxhall Cavalier, and keenly priced

Brash newcomer has eyes on global market

Daewoo is the world's 33rd biggest business according to *Fortune Magazine*, yet it is almost unknown in the West.

The business was founded in 1967 as a clothing and textiles exporter, but by 1993 had achieved sales worth about £21 billion a year, employing 100,000 people in 135 countries.

Not content with making everything from ships to spacecraft and buses to televisions, Daewoo — pronounced Day-oo — is intent on becoming a global car manufacturer. Worldwide production is scheduled to jump from around 660,000 cars a year now to more than 2 million, or four times the current size of Rover. Opening up in Britain will cost £150 million and create 2,000 jobs.

So far, Daewoo's ambitions have been limited by joint venture technology which, in the case of the two models on sale in Britain, comes from General Motors.

The base car, the Nexia, is a revamped version of Vauxhall's former Astra, phased out here about four years ago — and it drives like an old Vauxhall. The Nexia, in 1.5-litre 8-valve and 16-valve engine variants, is not going to shake the motoring establishment with its ride and drive, but the package will with standard side impact bars, power steering, adjustable steering column, immobiliser and driver's airbag.

The Espero's lineage to the Cavalier is more difficult to trace thanks to an elegant Bertone-styled body. That has a 1.5, 1.8 and 2.0-litre engine choice, none of which is earthshaking but the car is quiet and confident enough and packed with enough "goodies" to interest thousands of potential buyers.

Both cars have attractive though basic cabins and boots which are big but difficult to get into because the light clusters intrude at either side and there are electric tilt and slide sunroofs in most models.

The Nexia range starts at £8,295 for the GLi three-door up to £9,995 for the GLXi five-door while the Espero starts at £10,695 for the 1.5 GLXi, up to £12,195 for the Espero 2.0 CDXi. Each car comes with 30 days' peace of mind so they can be exchanged or money refunded if buyers are unhappy.

Come hell or high water.



Never has a 4 wheel drive been better equipped to brave the elements. With its 600mm wading depth, 2.8 litre Turbo-Diesel engine, 3.5 tonnes pulling power and 6-year anti-perforation warranty, the Fourtrak Independent is heaven sent when conditions are hellish.

Fourtrak Independent TDx £17,495.
Range starts from £14,995 including 3 year unlimited mileage warranty.

For more information on the Fourtrak send the coupon to Daihatsu Information Services, FREEPOST 506, Sandwich, Kent CT13 9BR. Or Freephone 0800 521 700

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CURRENT VEHICLE

MODEL YEAR

THE DAIHATSU FOURTRAK

PRICES CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS INCLUDE VAT BUT EXCLUDE DELIVERY AND NUMBER PLATES

Cameras poised to capture road tax dodgers

Helen Mound
on trapping car cheats on film

ROAD TAX dodgers could face prosecution using camera evidence for the first time later this year. New technology using an infra-red beam to spot a vehicle, a video camera to capture the image on film, and a microcomputer with software that can read number-plates, has been put through rigorous tests on bridges and in lay-bys across Britain.

Computer checks against the central register at the DVLA in Swansea can reveal if the vehicles were untaxed at the time the video was taken. Three companies provided the technology — known as Automatic Number Plate Reading (ANPR) — which included a second wide-angle camera to prove that the offending cars were on the road (a factor necessary for prosecution).

Hywel Harris, at the DVLA, who had to ensure that testing conditions were tough, says: "Each company filmed 5,000 cars over three days and nights in all weathers. Possible errors still have to be ironed out, such as the computer misreading the letter B as a number 6. But we're confident the technology will be up to scratch within a year."

Once a computer has checked the film for offending vehicles, a DVLA clerk will manually check for any discrepancies. If the computer finds a possible tax dodger, the clerk will check the number plate against the photograph and the make of car concerned to ensure there are no mistakes.

"If any inconsistencies are found between the photograph and the computer's number plate, we will halt proceedings," says Mr Harris. "However, if we're certain the car was on the road and untaxed, we will prosecute."

A report on the trials is still being considered, as there are a number of minor law changes necessary to allow the DVLA to use photographic evidence as a basis for prosecuting road tax evasion.

"Once we are satisfied the technology is near-foolproof, and that the evidence provided is sound and complies with the law, we will install fixed sites as well as mobile units for the camera equipment," says Mr Harris.

As well as spotting tax evaders on quiet suburban roads and on motorways, the DVLA will check places such as dockyards for untaxed lorries.

Cameras are not the only new weapon against tax dodgers. Regulations that come into force this autumn will allow vehicles parked on public roads without a tax disc to be clamped.

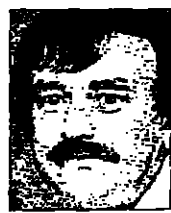
The DVLA claims it is after persistent offenders, not those whose discs have fallen off or whose tax has just expired. Mr Harris says: "Before any car is clamped, the details will be checked against our computer to ensure the car is untaxed. The clamp will be removed only when the motorist has paid the tax and the de-clamping fee."

The scheme will begin in London, as it is the only city with an official clamping operation, but other local authorities are likely to follow over the next 18 months.

"There is no point in taking your four-wheel-drive vehicle up a mountain, because your friends won't see you"

Give it some wellie — the off King's Roder

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

In the spirit of British enterprise which has done so much for the balance of payments of late, this column will shortly be diversifying into vehicle production. Already designers wearing an interesting combination of green wellies, Paul Smith shirts and Gap stacks are hard at work in my Kensington corporate headquarters and by this time next year my four-wheel drive creation, called the Fox, will be ready.

The trouble with the present generation of such vehicles is that they waste valuable space by having large, powerful engines designed for the mixed activity of driving down motorways at 70mph followed by a low-ratio weekend driving up the side of hills and along farm tracks axle-deep in cow dung.

This is a waste. The four-wheel drive is a fashion accessory. There is no point in driving it up a mountain, because your friends won't see you. It is not an off-roader, it is an off King's Roder, a pretentious heap for pretentious townies. My version will recognise this truth and will therefore be radically different from the Range Rover, Shogun, Prairie, Landcruiser et al. And it will be called the Fox because this wily four-wheel drive creature has all but vanished from the countryside for which

God allegedly designed it and is to be found only in urban areas.

My Fox will represent the reality rather than the myth. If you stand on the Chiswick flyover of a Friday evening you will see the present generation of off-roaders heading in one direction. Towards London. There they will join all the other off-roaders, which never leave London.

The Fox will cut through this nonsense by being incapable of leaving London except in the last resort following a nuclear holocaust. For it will be as big as a Range Rover but have an engine out of a Fiat Cinquecento, which is all of 903cc. The exhaust will be specially

designed to make it sound like something of about four litres and it will have enormously wide tyres. The interior will be to Ghia standards, including the luscious thick carpet which is *de rigueur* for existing off-roaders (just the job when your boots are covered in mud).

You may say that with an off-roader you do not have to get out so do not risk getting covered in mud. What a sad misconception. Many existing off-roaders have the aforementioned wide tyres, a dead giveaway in this market: tyres grip if the tread is deep, wide treads simply spin on top of the mud.

But in towns there is no mud, so of course wide tyres serve their designated purpose, which is to destroy pavements.

My Fox will save weight by not having an optional low-ratio gearbox, though it will have a low-ratio gear lever, for appearances sake. My guess is that it will be at least two years before any Fox owner discovers that the lever is not connected to anything.

At present I think I can produce the Fox for £15,000 but of course nobody will want anything that cheap so expect to pay £30,000.

I look forward to receiving your deposits.

It's been invaluable, darling... around the compost area



Turns are illegal on motorways but that did not prevent the Government deciding that it would not be going ahead with motorway tolls after all. According to Brian Mawhinney, the Transport Secretary, "we don't have the technology".

The plan was launched by the previous Transport Secretary in 1993 and since then civil servants, road lobbyists, motoring organisations, learned editorials and television

April fools rush in to make a false claim

The trouble with being a saint at the end of the phone on April Fool's Day is discovering which calls are genuine.

Last year staff at AA's insurance dealt with a man claiming on his policy because the gate on his drive had been stolen while a woman, who braked too hard, wanted to claim for two pints of spilled milk on the back seat. Another woman wasn't worried that her car had been towed away. She just wanted the AA to retrieve a pair of jeans from the back seat and deliver them to her daughter.

Getting the help

Help is at hand. Mr Walters, featured in the 1995 last week because he did not get his Honda's engine and down the steep driveway home and into his garage without grounding the nose. Robert Wighton, from Brighton, suggests he builds a "sleeping policeman" hump at the bottom of the drive to ease the nose up and over. Or he could buy a Citroen. Mr Wighton explains: "He could get a Xantia or BX whose bodies can be raised several inches on their suspension."

Discovery success

Yet more Land Rover Discoveries. The company, which was building 270 a week in 1989, is making 1,500 a week and speeding up assembly lines even further to 1,760 a week from August. Land Rover had its best year in 1994 with sales of 90,000 vehicles worldwide.

Glad to help

A British company has helped speed development of the automatic version of Ferrari's exotic 456GT. The Italians called in FFD-Ricardo to develop a four-speed transmission capable of handling a V12 engine that does not reach the red line on the rev counter until 7,300rpm.

Nissan price rise

Some Nissan models are more expensive from this week with £140 on the price of a Micra 1.0L three-door, which is now £6,995. There is a 1.5 per cent increase on all Sunny models while the Primera, built at Washington, Tyne & Wear, goes up by 2.8 per cent and the 200SX sports car by 2.3 per cent.

Sporting cut

Hyundai will cut £400 from the price of its sporty Scoupe model from today. The base MVI Scoupe, with its 1.5-litre engine, now starts at just under £10,000 with the more powerful Injection SE at £10,399 and the Scoupe Turbo SE with a 121mph top speed, £11,399.

Deal on VWs

Volkswagens bought before May 31 qualify for free servicing and maintenance for two years or up to 25,000 miles. The company announced yesterday that the offer applies to Golf, Corrado, Vento and Passat models.

Swift response

The lowest priced Japanese car on sale in the UK is the Suzuki Swift. Two new versions are with 150 dealers at £5,995 for the five-door 1.0-litre GC version, and £6,295 for the three-door GLS.

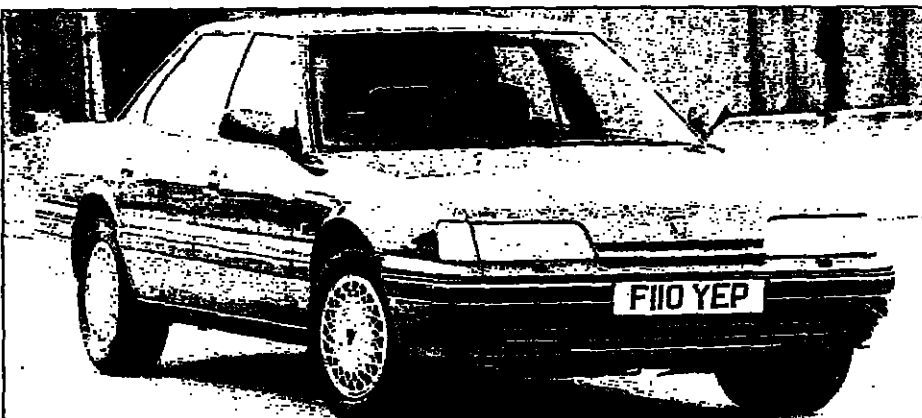
Airbag safety

Research in the United States shows airbags have reduced fatalities in head-on crashes by 23 per cent.

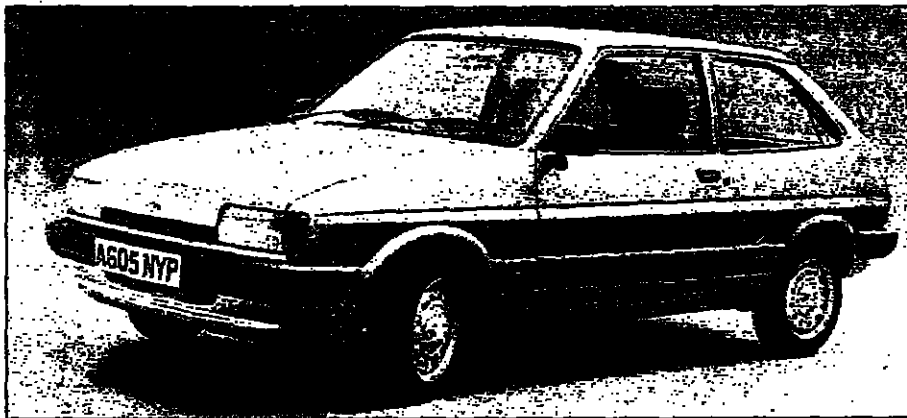
Hilton Holloway reports on the sophisticated conjuring tricks carmakers are using to save billions



The first Fiesta: with just a few cosmetic changes, the original design lasted 12 years



The Rover 800: too small and dainty, it was transformed from a moribund limo...



Fiesta Mark 2: but the 'new' 1984 model amounted to little more than a clever nose job



... into number one in the executive sales charts — just by adding on a few extra bits

Facelift is a term you normally associate with ageing actresses and the worst excesses of Hollywood. In recent years, however, facelifting has become one of the motor industry's most valued conjuring tricks.

The tin-bashing equivalent of plastic surgery has become a *de rigueur* for major manufacturers because it enables them to save literally billions of pounds when launching a fresh model.

In some cases makers are able to present a car as new simply by changing the shape of a few strategically-placed panels, but in others only the basic skeleton remains.

Most recently we've experienced the fanfare for the 1995 Ford Escort. As if you hadn't guessed, this is just a fairly thorough revamp of the model which was launched in mid-1990, and facelifted for the first time in mid 1992.

Look closely and you'll see that the modish appearance has been brought about by modified wings, and a new bonnet and bumper. In fact, this car has been so extensively modified both mechanically

Old models never die, they just get a facelift

and in the cabin, that it drives as if it were as new as the nose suggests.

Basically, a car can be broken down into four sections: the inner structure, the outer skin, running gear and interior fittings. Of these, the inner structure (usually called the floorpan) is by far the most expensive part of the car to redesign.

Change this and enormous amounts of money would have to be spent modifying the exterior panels, running gear and interior fittings.

With fresh-faced models now expected every five or six years in order to keep up with the competition, manufacturers have discovered that clever external and internal tweaks can extend the life of a mainstream model by as much as a decade.

Ford can probably be credited with the invention of the modern, life-enhancing facelift: its team of designers managed to transform the curvilinear 1960s Granada, best known as Inspector Regan's transport in *The Sweeney*, into the square-set late 1970s motorway patrol car. Although the two cars looked completely different, thanks to fresh panels and a new interior, under the skin they were pretty much identical.

Ford then repeated this trick with the Fiesta, originally launched in 1976. By simply changing the nose and plumbings in a new interior it created the 1984 Mk 2 Fiesta, extending the life of the basic original design to more than 12 years, until the all-new model replaced it in 1989.

The Rover Metro, born in 1980, is now on its third nose and second interior. Now known as the 100 series, it looks like the fundamental design might even just come of age. If it staggers on into 1998.

Of course, the longer a basic design stays in production, the more profit is made on each car that rolls off the production line.

However, the increasing popularity of putting cars under the knife has not been without hitches. Grafting a new nose and tail on to an existing car can lead to the worst of all worlds, mirroring the schizophrenic appearance that characterises the nipped and tuckered elderly. Ford's Scorpio shows even the most experienced surgeons can get it wrong. This executive barge shows its 1984 origins with a

period high window line and flat sides. Trying to tack on a shovel nose and tapering boot has not, despite what Ford says, improved on the old model.

But facelifting can also rescue fading and misjudged designs. One of the most successful carried out was that wrought on the Rover 800, catapulting a moribund ministerial limo to number one in the executive sales charts. According to Roy Axe, of Rover's design team at that time, it was quickly realised that the 800 looked too small and dainty amongst its rivals in the executive car park, so within 18 months it was "bulked out".

Looking at the two cars side by side, it's hard to believe that Rover changed so few panels. A new bonnet, bumpers,

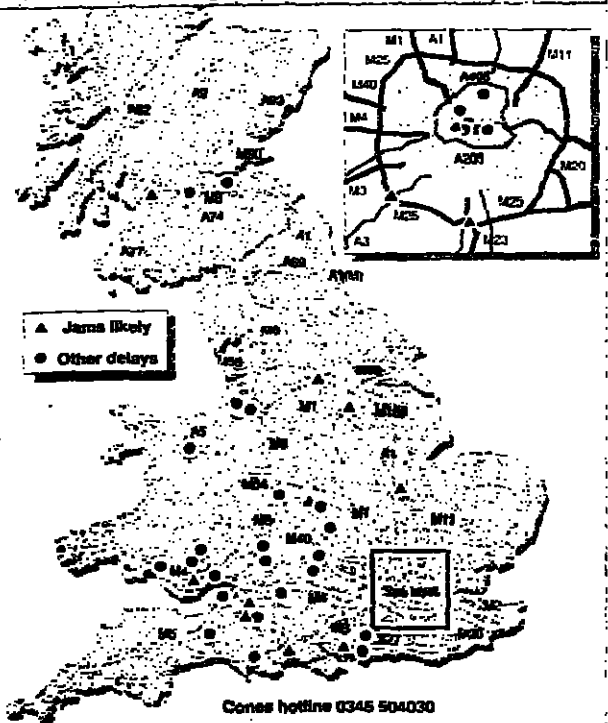
wings and headlights at the front and new rear wings, bumper and tail lights transformed the car. Even the doors are identical, with just the addition of a rubbing strip to disguise some of the 800's numerous body ridges. In fact, the two cars are so closely related that the status-conscious motorist on a budget can take the fluted bonnet and chrome grille of the new car and bolt it straight on to the old model.

This rash of remoulded metal is set to continue apace. Later this year, Ford will unwrap the bandages to reveal yet another "new" Fiesta with the same understructure as the current car (if you don't believe it when you see it, look closely at the windscreen and side windows).

Other cars that will go under the knife in the next year or so include the Rover Coupé, Cabriolet and Tourer trio and the Skoda Favorit, which is soon to re-emerge as the Felicia.

But perhaps the easiest to rumble is the new Daewoo Nexia: yes, it's the old Vauxhall Astra/Beimont with a nose job!

MAJOR ROADWORKS



AA ROADWATCH — YOUR GUIDE TO THE WORST TRAFFIC BLACKSPOTS

● LONDON

Earls Court: delays daily between 10am and 6pm until April 9 for Ideal Home exhibition.

Putney and Mortlake: The University Boat Race today avoid Putney Bridge, Hammersmith Bridge, Great West Rd, Fulham Palace Rd, Lonsdale Rd in Barnes and all riverside roads.

London Marathon: Delays tomorrow around route in Greenwich, Blackheath, Surrey Quays, Brunel Rd, Tooley St, Canary Wharf, Tower of London, Embankment, Parliament Sq, Birdcage Walk and The Mall. Coca-Cola Cup Final: 5pm start at Wembley today. Usual big match traffic.

A406 Upper Edmonton: Road width reduced on Lea Valley Viaduct.

A219 Putney Bridge: reduced to one lane each way for repairs until June.

A214 Trinity Rd, Wandsworth: temporary lights at junction with Burnwood Lane cause regular delays.

● SOUTH WEST

M5 Avon J18-19 (Avonmouth/Portbury): lane closures each way as part of new Severn Crossing works.

M5 Glos J11-12 (Cheltenham): contraflow until September.

A4 Bath: restrictions on London Rd West in Bath-easton. Long delays.

A417: contraflow on Barnwood Bypass.

A350 Warminster: temporary lights 24 hours a day for roadworks and the road will be tomorrow and April 9.

A3102 Swindon: contraflow on Wootton Bassett Rd, east of Whitehill Way.

A36 Somerset: major roadworks near Norton Saint Philip, at A356 junction until May.

A358 Taunton: construction work on Bishops Lydeard Rd

at Penn Elm Hill.

A31 Dorset: major roadworks on Ashley Heath and Woodbridge roundabouts cause long delays.

A35 Dorset: temporary lights between Puddletown and Tolpuddle until May.

● SOUTH EAST

M25 J7-8 (M23/Reigate): roadworks cause regular delays and affects traffic joining from M23 northbound.

M25 J10-11 (A3/Chertsey): lane closures each way.

A3 Guildford: rush hour delays until end of May.

A27 Chichester Bypass: contraflow between Stockbridge and Bognor Rd roundabouts, with lane closures also at Westhampnett until May.

M275 Hampshire between Portsmouth and M27: contraflow for maintenance.

A420 near Faringdon: temporary lights 24 hours a day for roadworks, overnight and weekend restrictions. Long

delays between Oxford and Swindon.

● MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA

Coventry: Guild Procession on April 7 via Earl Street, Hay Lane, Bayley Lane and Cuckoo Lane then via Broadgate and High St.

A43 Silverstone: resurfacing work with temporary lights daily (no work on Sundays or over Easter Weekend).

A4123 near Dudley: one lane closed each way on the Birmingham New Rd, between Burnt Tree Island and Tipton Rd junction until June.

A45 Stonebridge: flyover construction at A452 junction and widening between M42 J6 and Stonebridge Island, 40mph limit and lane closures until June.

A47 Peterborough: the Link Rd closed between Bretton Way and A15 Lincoln Rd interchanges, from 7pm to day to 5am Monday.

● NORTH

M6 Cheshire J20-21A (Lymm-Croft): roadworks continue near Thelwall Viaduct.

M57 Merseyside J1 (Tarbock Island): roadworks and lane closures at roundabout junction with the M62.

A58M Leeds: on the Inner Ring Road, the exit slip road to Eastgate and Regent St closed.

M18 Doncaster: contraflow between J3 and J4, and southbound exit slip road at J3 is closed.

● WALES

A467 Newport: contraflow on Forge Lane, while work underways on A48 at Tridegar Park roundabout.

M42 J6 and Stonebridge Island, 40mph limit and lane closures until June.

A47 Peterborough: the Link Rd closed between Bretton Way and A15 Lincoln Rd interchanges, from 7pm to day to 5am Monday.

A47 Peterborough: the Link Rd closed between Bretton Way and A15 Lincoln Rd interchanges, from 7pm to day to 5am Monday.

A5 Maerdy, Cwtyd: improvements at Glyn bends. Temporary lights at times and short-term closures until end July.

A465 West Glamorgan, between Llandarcy and Aberdual: contraflow along Saltings Viaduct for resurfacing.

A4223 Pontypriod: one-way system on Gellwastad Road until end of June.

● SCOTLAND

M8 in Strathclyde: contraflow for roadworks at J5 (Canderside).

Edinburgh: width restrictions on High St between North and South bridges.

A8 Glasgow: Paisley Rd West closed eastbound between Portman St and Paisley Rd Toll, with diversions for city bound traffic.

● NORTHERN IRELAND

A26 Co Londonderry: temporary lights on Greenhill Rd at junction with Ballymoney Bypass until September.

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8. Simple fabric frame...
9. Simple paper frame...
10. Simple cardboard frame...

Vaughan Freeman, testing the ultimate funmobile, emerges cramped, soaked - and stunned

Blazing a trail in the retro Rocket



Gordon Murray with his Rocket: 'This is the car I wanted to design before I died. Driving The Rocket is like falling off a cliff. Nothing else comes near it for acceleration and responsiveness of handling'

The name is schoolboy stuff, the looks are nostalgically outrageous and the performance of the street-legal Rocket is either thrilling or terrifying depending on your nerves. It is the brainchild of Gordon Murray, the man who brought us the world's fastest and most expensive production car - the £635,000, 230mph McLaren F1. He calls his new, super-light, motorcycle-engined Rocket "the most fun car in the world".

It seats two in fierce discomfort, the passenger wedged behind the driver so that both enjoy the central-seating position of a racing car. Luxuries? None. There is no room for frilleries such as a stereo, heater or roof. In return for blinding acceleration, and admiring glances, you get a wet bottom and a lapful of rain in adverse weather.

In essence, The Rocket is a 1960s Formula One car, reincarnated for the 1990s and engineered to be MoT passable. The theory was simple: so much ample power to minimum weight. The result is a car that weighs only 370 kilograms, uses a 1,000cc Yamaha motorcycle engine and a racing tubular space frame chassis, with aluminium and carbon fibre panels and body parts.

Its shape recalls the days when Graham Hill, Jim Clark and their peers raced cars with names such as Varwall and BRM. All pleasing curves rather than the stark lines of today's computer-designed Formula One missiles.

Priced at £37,500, The Rocket promises more performance per lb than virtually any other car on the road. It covers 0-60mph in 4.4 seconds, 0-100mph in 10 seconds, and has a top speed of 145mph.

Easy it isn't. It took almost four minutes to crush my 6ft 5in frame into the rear seat, where I was snugly cocooned, dislocated knees and all, behind professional driver Paul Forster. Helmet and four-belt harness on, we shot off around the Longcross test track at Chertsey in Surrey. Despite pouring rain, The Rocket stunned.

Having expected a harsh, jolting racing-car drive, the ride was pleasantly gentle, and the low-slung stance and lack of roof mean speed is truly experienced. The sensation is light years from that of motoring in a family saloon. The rear-mounted engine barks, revving freely to an extraordinary 10,500rpm. The clutch is incredibly sensitive and the five-speed gearbox is operated via a two-inch aluminium tube.

After some red-faced stalling, I

was able to get The Rocket round the course without it ever seeming less than assured and manageable, and far more competent than its driver.

The car is built by Chris Craft, a former professional Formula One driver, and his Oxfordshire-based Light Car Company, which will manufacture 30 a year.

He says: "I met Gordon Murray when he designed the car I drove at Le Mans in 1972, and ever since we have been talking about building the ultimate, fun, road-going car, the alternative supercar."

"We were on holiday together in France, had a glass of wine or two, and decided to do something about it. So it has taken the best part of 20 years to get the idea into metal."

Mr Murray says: "This is the car I

wanted to design before I died. Driving The Rocket is like falling off a cliff. Nothing else comes near it for acceleration and responsiveness of handling. My favourite designer was and still is Colin Chapman, who built cars in the 1960s that are still modern. He launched his Lotus Seven in 1957 and since then it has been the definitive car if you wanted something with responsive steering for sheer driving pleasure."

He went on: "The only way to make a car substantially better than the Seven was to make it substantially lighter. I wanted to make something ridiculously light and the only way was to use a motorcycle engine, then engineer everything else around it."

"We wanted to evoke the shape of the racing cars of the late 1950s, such as the Varwall and the Lotus Formula One cars, and build some-

thing that flowed like the Aston DB3 or 300S Maserati, which never look dated."

"Both The Rocket and the McLaren F1 are about giving ultimate statements: the McLaren is the ultimate super sports car on the road, the Rocket gives the ultimate driving fun."

"You need to push design forward, and if you don't have an extreme end of everything, you end up with grey, and the everyday stuff in the middle suffers."

TECHNICAL DETAILS
Engine: Yamaha 1000cc, 4-cylinder, 20-valve, producing 143bhp at 10,500rpm.
Transmission: Five-speed manual with sequential gear change.
Fuel consumption: 50mpg overall.
Insurance: cars will need to be individually brokered.

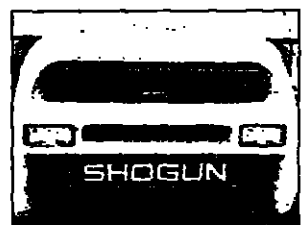
Mitsubishi softens up bull-bars after alert on safety

Kevin Eason on a move to cut child casualties

MITSUBISHI has reacted to claims that steel bull-bars can kill by introducing a "softer" plastic type for its popular Shogun four-wheel-drive.

The Government is considering a ban on the heavy bars, which are designed to protect the grilles and headlamps of 4x4 cars but increase the danger to pedestrians hit by vehicles such as the Shogun, the Land Rover Discovery or Isuzu Trooper.

Mitsubishi says its new bars, described as "front styling bars", were designed after contact with worried customers. As many as 500,000 vehicles are thought to be fitted with the bars, including 75 per cent of 4x4s, which use bars weighing up to 40kgs. Car 95 revealed earlier this month. Pedestrians, particularly children, tend to be mown down by the bars



Softening the blow: the plastic Mitsubishi bars

instead of flipped on to the bonnet to avoid the worst of a collision. The Transport Research Laboratory claims that up to 35 people a year, including 15 children, are killed as a result of injuries caused by bull-bars.

Mitsubishi has designed bars made from a recyclable, lightweight polyurethane which are the first to comply with safety impact regulations still to be ratified by the European Union.

The bars were tested by the German Federal Highway Research Institute and pass the proposed directive for vehicle safety laid down by the European Experimental Vehicles Committee. The draft directive is now with the European Union and should be rubber-stamped soon.

Mitsubishi says there are still some final tests to be done but the bars should be available at dealers by July, in black or colour-coded to match the body finish. The retail price is expected to be £445.

THE TIMES Historic print offer

Today we offer readers a further opportunity to buy prints of two of John Lawson's cut-away illustrations of Lord Montagu's series of outstanding British vehicles: the Bentley 3-litre (right), and the Austin 7.

The prints are available in two formats:

- Unframed, 297mm by 420mm, on 130gm paper. Price £3.99 including VAT and carriage.
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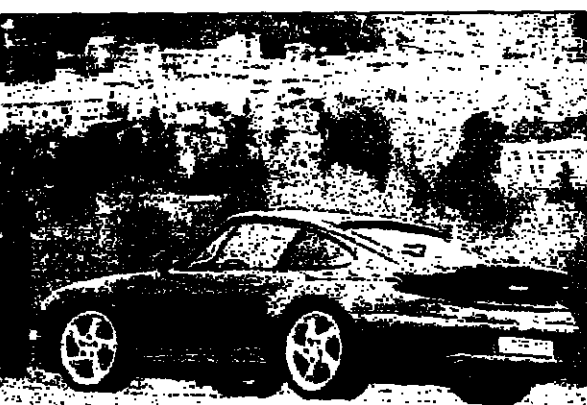
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CARS ON SHOW AT BEAULIEU

An exhibition of all 12 cars featured by Lord Montagu and sponsored by Car 95 will be open from this month until the end of September at the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu. Full details of a reduced price admission offer will appear next week.

Porsche's minor masterpiece

Eric Dymock puts the new 911 Turbo through its rapid paces



FACTS AND FIGURES

Engine: rear-mounted, air-cooled flat-six, 3,600cc, twin turbochargers, intercooler, 408bhp at 5,750rpm
Transmission: six-speed manual gearbox, four-wheel drive, limited slip differential
Performance: top speed 180mph, 0-60mph in 4.5sec
Fuel consumption: 13.5mpg urban; 34.4mpg at 56mph; 27.4mpg at 75mph
Price: £91,950. Insurance: Group 20

In 1986, at the height of the classic car boom, Porsche planned the 959, the first of a new sort of supercar that culminated in the McLaren F1. News of the Porsche encouraged Ferrari to build the F40 and Jaguar the XJ220, and although none turned out to be the investments buyers were led to expect, they were pinnacles of automotive achievement.

The 959 was priced at about £150,000 and 200 were to be built. Before even one was finished, places in the queue of buyers changed hands at a premium. Within weeks of 13 being allocated to the UK, 959s were being advertised for £250,000.

Prices have come down since classic car values collapsed in 1990 and now Porsche is offering a road-going 911 Turbo that is something of a poor man's 959. "Poor" is relative: the new model, nearly as fast and powerful as the 959, costs £91,950.

The 911 Turbo has a 3.6-litre engine with two KKK turbochargers, a six-speed gearbox, four-wheel drive, and a test drive last week in France showed that it, like the 959, has the performance of a racing car with the refinement of a road car.

It has a top speed of 180mph and its 400 horsepower provides acceleration that can be literally breathtaking. Turbo-lag, the time-lapse between pressing the accelerator and the turbo spinning up to full power, has been virtually eliminated. The speed comes in great surges in each of the six gears.

The combination of immense stopping power and the grip of 10in wheels with great, fat low-profile, racing-style tyres is reassuring when other vehicles on the road suddenly

seem to be coming at you at high speed backwards. The wide tyres and four-wheel drive provide the 911 Turbo with tenacious road grip.

It has inherited the 959's hollow-spoked alloy wheels, together with a new manufacturing technique. The weight of wheels is crucial to good handling, and designers go to almost any lengths to reduce it. The 911 Turbo's wheels are made with spokes welded to the rims by friction, which means spinning the wheel centrepiece against the rim under pres-

sure, creating heat and fusing the two together.

Porsche spares no expense and little effort to create a minor masterpiece. Whether you regard the entire car as a masterpiece depends on the sort of car you want. As supercars go, the 911 Turbo is not for the faint-hearted and some drivers will find the turbulent ride tiresome.

The rear-engine weight distribution and short wheel-base, together with firm springing and low-profile tyres, provide a lot of fore-and-aft pitching and harsh vibrations over rough surfaces. It is a trade-off for the astonishing

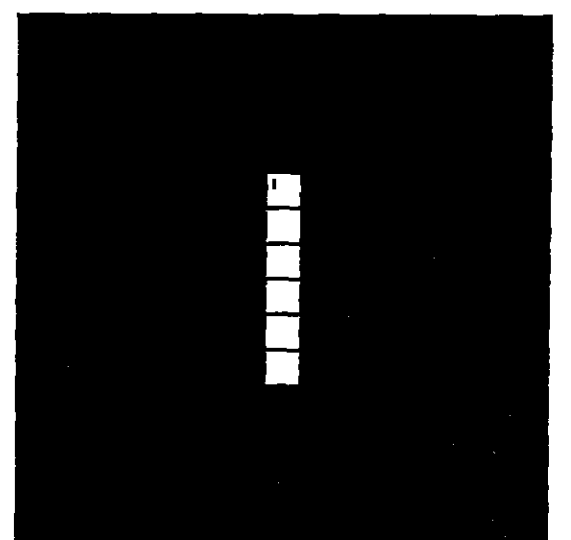
traction and contour-hugging which makes the car heave on every camber, and jolt on every rut almost exactly as a racing car would away from its natural element, a billiard-table smooth circuit.

Cornering power is prodigious. There is scarcely any body roll, no slide, no tail-heaviness - which is effectively cancelled out by the four-wheel drive - and no question of reaching its limits on the road. Given the wide spaces of a test track, it might be possible to determine how much warning the driver gets of a spin, but for all practical purposes the problem can be ignored, at least in the dry.

The steering is appropriate - heavy enough to transmit the feel of how the front wheels are behaving, light enough to make the quick, high-geared movements necessary to dart from corner to corner smoothly and swiftly.

The gearbox takes a little getting used to because the ratios are so closely-spaced that it is easy to forget in the heat of the moment - and at 911 Turbo speeds heated moments come thick and fast - which gear you are in. The lever is thoughtfully weighted to make selection of the next gear swift and natural, however, a fine piece of detailing that stems directly from one of the longest and most distinguished racing pedigrees in the history of motor sport.

There are easier ways of covering the ground quickly than buying a Porsche 911 Turbo. A Honda NSX is about half the price and rides like a limousine. It is exquisitely balanced, quiet and smooth, with no contour-following heaves, and as easy to drive as a Honda Civic - which is perhaps its problem.



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Its custom-built coachwork by LeBaron includes bleached walnut woodwork with a silver inlay and "his and hers" rear vanity cases. Interior fittings include ashtrays finished in cloisonné enamel.

[illegible][illegible]

Vaughan Freeman on how best to put a classic stored for the winter safely back on the road

Putting the spring in an old car's step

Classic car owners who rush to get their machines out of winter storage at the first sign of a spring weekend risk damaging their vehicles, or even an accident, unless they bring their cars back to life properly.

Many are ill-prepared or simply too careless to check for the damage that an unheated garage and months of standing still can wreak.

Mike Williams, managing director of Kent-based Beaufr Restoration Services, which specialises in recommissioning cars for use after winter lay-ups, says: "Around this time you get two or three warm weekends and owners remember they have got their old car tucked away somewhere."

"Often they have not been out even to look at the car, much less start it up every few weeks, as we advise."

Often, he says, owners simply charge up the flat battery and drive off, little realising that tyres, brakes, steering or even the engine could have deteriorated to a dangerous extent. "The sort of problems owners have are sticking clutches or frozen brakes," says Mr Williams. "Also, if brakes are not used, the brake fluid attracts and absorbs water. This leads to eventual brake failure."

Mr Williams says: "If your car is stored in less than ideal conditions, it's better to run it through the winter, even on salted roads, than to store it without proper care then try to start it without thorough preparation."

Those about to recommission a laid-up car should, he says, follow this procedure. First, check for tyres that might have deflated and leaks from the engine, gearbox, brake lines, cylinders, axles, half-shafts and wheel bearings. Also check for rust and perished hoses or seals.

Top up the battery with battery fluid (not tap water or distilled water) and then trickle charge it.

Oil in the engine will have drained to the bottom of the sump, so remove spark plugs (which should be cleaned and re-sealed), then squirt a thimbleful of lubricant such as Redex into each cylinder. Now turn the engine over for 10 or 15 seconds on the starter before replacing the plugs.

If the cooling system was drained before the lay-up,

flush it before refilling, then check for leaks. Check oil levels in the gearbox and axle castings, and the petrol. Check all electrical connections, then roll - do not drive - your car out of the garage to check the brakes are working properly. Then prime a mechanical fuel pump by hand and put some fresh petrol in the float bowl of the carburettor. Turn on the ignition and if you have an electric fuel pump, listen for the ticking. Now start the car.

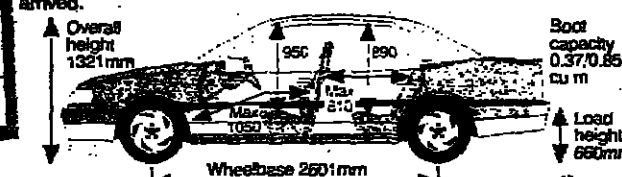


Time to rise: but after a rest, it needs a gentle reawakening

With the engine running, take a walk round checking for leaks or odd noises (eg, rusted and holed exhaust, then test all lights and the horn and again check tyre pressures and the side walls. A trial run is advisable, if possible on a private road, to check for clutch and brake problems.

USED CAR BRIEF

VAUXHALL CAVALIER Introduced in October 1988, the Mark II Cavalier carried over many components from its predecessor. It has been continuously marketed and updated. Launched in four-door saloon and five-door hatchback, the Cavalier started life with 1.4, 1.6 and 2.0-litre petrol engines as well as a 1.7-litre diesel. Within a year came a four-wheel drive model. Power steering has been standard since 1991, and a catalyst since the 1992 facelift. In 1993 2.0 V6 models were introduced, and in 1994 the super-economical 1.6i-Drive unit and 16-valve 2.0-litre engines arrived.



GOOD NEWS: The Cavalier is so popular with company fleets, drivers who cover high mileage each year, that it is reliable. Many private buyers also like its spaciousness and low running costs. **REPLACEMENT PARTS:** (Prices include VAT) clutch assembly £145, front suspension £150, rear dampers £200, front brake pads £70, alternator £120 (exchange), starter motor £120 (exchange). **SAFETY RATING:** As a larger car the Cavalier makes a more attractive proposition for insurance companies. In the latest Department of Transport safety figures, ahead of rivals such as the Toyota Aurion and behind the Audi 80 and VW Passat.

TO AVOID: Early 1.4-litre models are considered gutless. Cars without power steering which will make it tough driving a chore. Since so many Cavaliers are available with electric windows, sun roof, and lock braking and airbags it seems difficult to settle for more basic models. **PRICE RANGE:** Expect to pay around £2,950 for a non-catalyst 1988 1.4-litre four-door, £5,000 for a 1992 1.6i four-door, £5,500 for a 1990 1.6i four-door, £5,500 for a 1993 1.6i four-door, £5,500 for a 1993 1.6i four-door, £5,500 for a 1993 1.6i four-door.

OVERALL: A sound car made more attractive by 9,000-mile service intervals and inexpensive labour and parts costs. It has lasted well because it was well thought out to begin with. Vauxhall soon to launch a new Cavalier, used prices could fall.

50 BESTSELLING USED CARS

MODEL	PRICE		
	Mar-95	Apr-95	Chge
Rover 820 Si 4dr	13895	13650	-1.77
Nissan Primera 2.0i SGX 5dr	10495	10395	-0.96
Honda Accord 2.0i LS 4dr	13195	12795	-3.04
Mazda 626 1.8 GLX 5dr	11195	10850	-3.09
Volvo 480 2.0 ES 3dr	12350	12250	-0.81
Vauxhall Cavalier 2.0 SRi 16V 5dr	10995	10995	0.00
Ford Mondeo 2.0i Si 4dr	10750	10750	0.00
Renault Clio 16V 3dr	10595	10695	0.94
Citroen Xantia 1.8i SX 5dr	11095	10895	-1.81
Jeep Wrangler 4.0 2dr	12995	12995	0.00
Subaru Legacy 2.0i GL Est	12550	12450	-0.80
Saab 900 2.0i S 5dr	14250	14250	0.00
Renault Espace 2.0i RN 5dr	10150	10150	0.00
Peugeot 405 GLD Est	10150	10150	0.00
Nissan 200 SX 2.0i 3dr	14150	14025	-0.39
Toyota Camry E Executive 5dr	12550	12350	-1.60
Suzuki Vitara 4x4 SE 3dr	11150	11150	0.00
Mitsubishi Galant 1.8i GLSi 4dr	10650	10450	-1.88
Hyundai Sonata 2.0i GLX 4dr	10695	10350	-1.88
Ford Granada 2.0i Ghia Auto 4dr	13850	13595	-1.84
Audi 80 1.6 4dr	11150	11150	0.00
Volvo 940 2.0i Wenthworth 4dr	14950	14950	0.00
Vauxhall Cavalier V6 Diplomatic 5dr	13895	13695	-1.44
Rover 820 Si 4dr	13095	12650	-3.40
Renault Safrane 2.0i RN 5dr	12495	12495	0.00
Peugeot 605 SLi 4dr	12495	12150	-2.76
Nissan Serena 2.0i SLX 7st Est	13995	13495	-0.74
Audi 80 2.0i E 4dr	12695	12350	-1.14
Citroen 2.0i ZX 16V 3dr	10550	10595	0.43
Daihatsu Sportrak ELXi 3dr	12295	12095	-1.63
Ford Escort RS 2000 3dr	12550	12195	-2.83
Honda Civic ESi 3dr	10395	10150	-2.36
Mitsubishi Lancer GLXi 5dr	10450	10350	-0.95
Peugeot 306 XS 5dr	11550	11550	0.00
Toyota Corolla 1.6i Executive 5dr	11995	11795	-1.67
Vauxhall Astra 2.0i Convertible	11695	11695	0.00
Volkswagen Passat 2.0i GL 4dr	13150	12795	-2.70
Mazda 323 1.6i GLX (SR) 5dr	10395	10395	0.00
Renault 19 16V 3dr	10595	10495	-0.95
Subaru Impreza 1.8i GL Est	11150	11150	0.00
Vauxhall Calibra 1.6i 3dr	14995	14995	0.00
Vauxhall Carlton 2.0i CDXi Auto 4dr	14895	14850	-0.16
Citroen XM 2.0i Est	14195	14150	-0.32
Daihatsu Fourtrak TDL 3dr	14295	14450	1.08
Ford Escort 1.8i Ghia TD Est	10495	10495	0.00
Honda Accord 2.0i LS Coupe 2dr	14495	14195	-2.07
Audi 100 2.0 E 4dr	14195	14195	0.00
Mazda Xedos 6 1.6i 4dr	14195	14195	0.00
Mitsubishi V6 24V Coupe 5dr	14450	13850	-4.16
Rover 216 Cabriolet 2dr	12895	12795	-0.78

Prices rounded to simulate actual dealer list prices. Hb = hatchback, S = saloon. Price changes based on 1 reg. low mileage cars. Figures supplied in CIP National's Motor Research.

COMPANY cars with high mileage are attracting attention as buyers lower their sights and look for bargains, according to Glass's Guide to Car Values.

The repercussions of the sudden drop in retail demand for new cars has been felt all the way down the buying chain. Fewer new cars means fewer trade-ins and fewer good used cars for dealers to sell.

Leslie Allen, guide managing director, says: "The trade always wants ideal stock, two to three years old, one private owner, full service history, below average mileage. With fewer sales of new cars to retail customers and a pending loss of quality trade-ins, this stock has become a rarity. Many dealers are willing to retail used cars with up to 80,000 miles recorded, providing the car has a full main dealer history."

Ex-company cars can be good buys because they have been maintained properly, spent their lives mainly on motorways rather than stop-starting in town, and late-registered cars can be priced as low as earlier models with lower mileages.



GED MELLING

FERRARI WANTED

385 New or Used, immediate cash. Call 0181 500 0000. Ferrari wanted by JCT 500. All new models. Cash. Call 0181 500 0000. Ferrari wanted by JCT 500. All new models. Cash. Call 0181 500 0000.

FIAT

TOP DISCOUNT on all New Fiat cars. Call 0181 500 0000. Fiat wanted by JCT 500. All new models. Cash. Call 0181 500 0000.

FORD

ALL Ford cars wanted. New from 1994. Call 0181 500 0000. Ford wanted by JCT 500. All new models. Cash. Call 0181 500 0000.

MAVERICK'S

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FOUR WHEEL DRIVE

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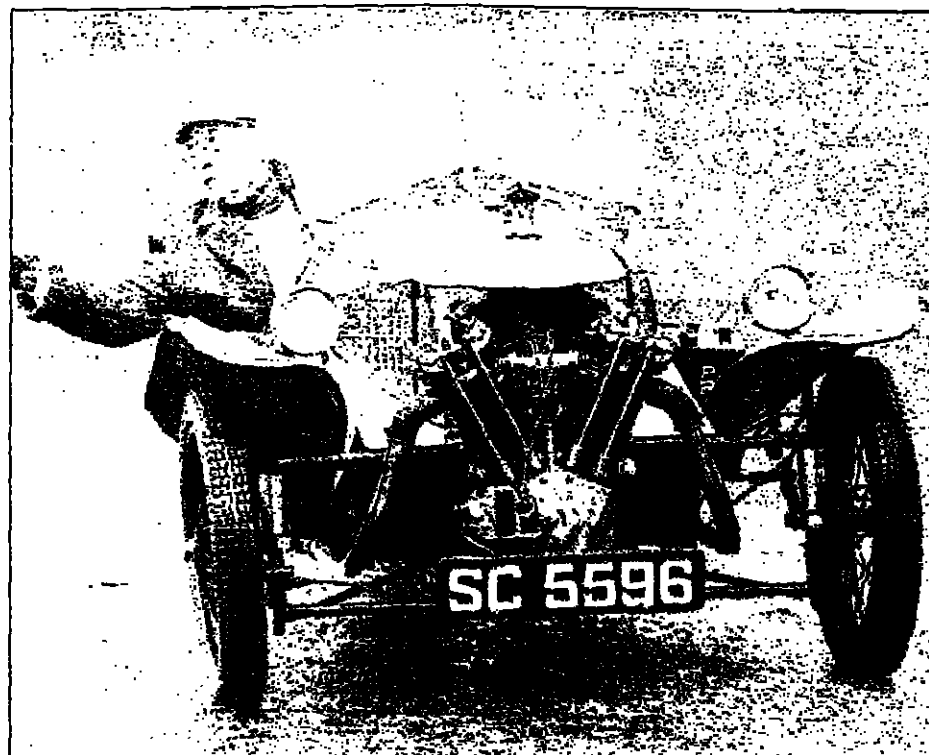
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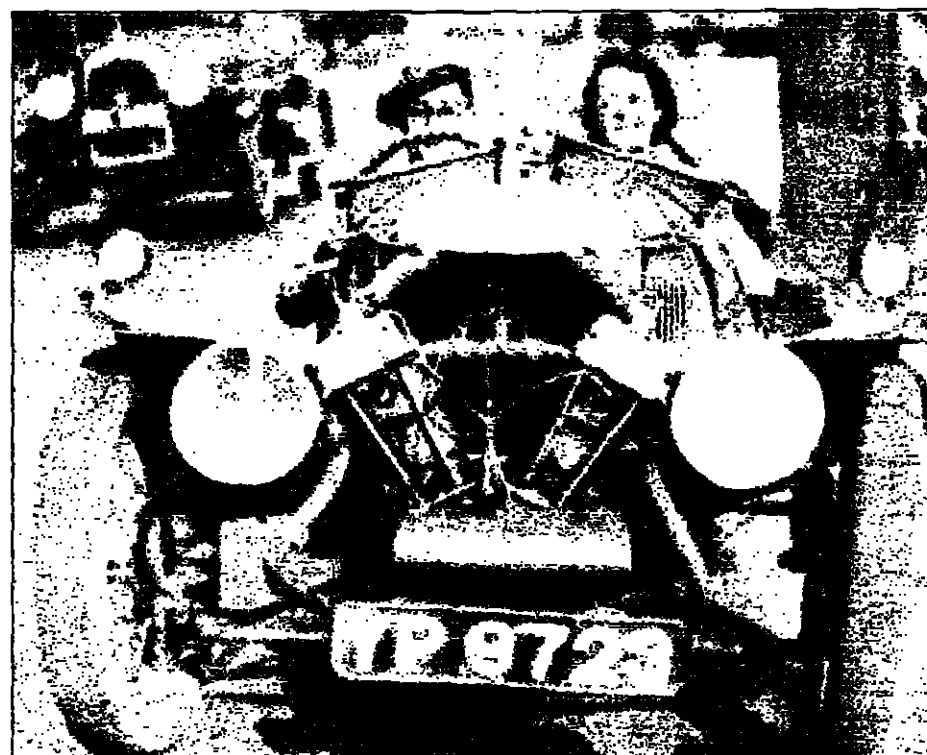
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DISCOVERY

Richard Herd is bracingly whisked back more than half a century by a trip in a three-wheeler Morgan Aero



Magnificent Manfred: back to the good old days in an immaculate 1929 Morgan



Fiery Freda: Mr Herd and his mother in the Aero he bought 60 years ago for £8

A glorious return to racy days of whine and roses

from the ground, it felt like 100mph.

Her steering wheel was large, thin and made of hard metal. We proud enthusiasts used to dolly them up with black silken cord. The handbrake was outside the car and it didn't have a door. Anyway, it was easier and sportier, we thought, to leap

over the side and drop into the seat.

I will admit that for my sentimental trip in an Aero, I did not vault over the side. I couldn't. I had to lift my left leg over the side, sit on top of the seat and wriggle my lower half between the wheel and the seat.

Once in, though, it took just

minutes to absorb the glorious throb of the engine, a JAP in this model. Then with wind, rain, hail and sleet battering my face and top half, the adrenalin surged and that wonderful feeling of exhilaration came flooding back.

My journey back in time was in an immaculate carbon-red Aero called Manfred.

dating from 1929 and owned by John Hoard, of Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. And despite the cold, my face eventually glowed with warmth and I swear the seat got softer and the hail like a warm shower.

After years in the motoring wilderness, driving soft-seated, whispering, automatic sa-

loons, Manfred roared me along dual carriageways and up leafy lanes with all the pleasurable freedom I had found in Freda.

She had a starting handle rather than a starter, but wet or freezing cold I don't remember it giving me much trouble. She had two gears, 1st and 2nd: no reverse. To back out of a driveway meant lifting the light tail and walking it round.

That made parking easy. No backing into a tight space: just drive straight in, often at an angle, then lift the tail to the kerb.

Looking at her picture now, I realise I must have been a bit lax, running round with the offside headlamp taped up to cover the cracks. But although the lamps were just plain glass, and nobody had yet dreamed up an MOT test, it still would have cost half a crown (12½p) to replace it.

Freda did 65-70mpg when the average price was one shilling and three pence (7p) a gallon. And with the Road Fund Licence, I think, only £4 a year and the price of insurance negligible, I could use her indiscriminately. And still.

Has anybody out there seen my Freda?

THERE are still 2,300 Morgan three-wheelers dotted around the world, some worth up to £20,000. I set out to search for dear old Fiery Freda but did not find her among the cherished 450 roadworthy models in Britain. I did, though, find several built before mine and still in perfect condition: an octogenarian who still regularly drives one round his home town; a girl given one for an engage-

ment present instead of a ring; a husband who roared away from church with his blushing young bride in one; and a thriving, friendly and helpful owner's club.

Nick Taylor, 47, a land surveyor from Loughton, Essex, gave his fiancée a Mog (as they are called) for her engagement present. Well, not so much a complete car, in fact, it was in bits — and still is.

"I'll get down to building her completely one day," said Mr Taylor.

I sold YP 9723 for £4 at a lay-by on the Southend Arterial Road in the summer of 1936, but I have not given up trying to find her. My next concentrated search will be among enthusiasts attending the 50th anniversary of the Morgan Three-Wheeler Club at Brooklands next Sunday.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The modern radial tyre

THE inside of a modern radial tyre is made up of fabric cords and steel wire (Vaughan Freeman writes).

The radial ply run at various angles across the tyre from the steel wires or beads, which run within the inner edges of the tyre and built up against the wheel rim. This radial ply forms the tyre's basic carcass and is made up of rayon, nylon or polyester cords.

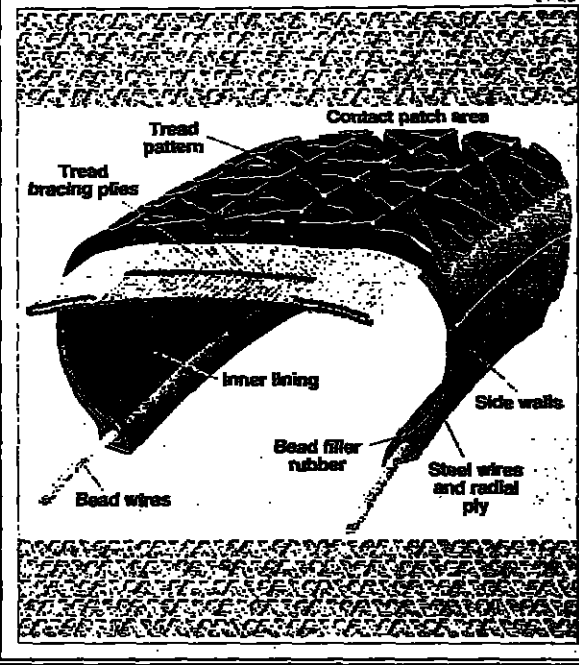
Running across the radial ply and circumferentially around the tyre is a layer of steel wires, often supplemented by nylon or polyester cords. This forms the "belt" which stops the tyre being pulled out of shape by centrifugal forces when it is running at high speed.

This "belt" also stabilises the "contact patch" of the tyre. At any one point, each tyre's contact with the road is roughly a four by five inch area of rubber.

Tyres play a crucial part in the car's suspension because the compressed air inside them makes them work as a spring. It is the air in the tyre rather than the stiffness of the tyre's walls that carries up to 95 per cent of the average saloon car's 2,000 lbs weight.

The tyre's tread pattern is made up of blocks of rubber, between which run channels and small slots called sipes. These allow road surface water to be squeezed out of the way, so that the rubber blocks of the pattern can make contact with the road and provide grip. If the tread is worn, water will build up between the tyre and the road, causing loss of grip and aquaplaning.

The parts of the tyre are made separately and then assembled. The complete assembly is heated in a vulcanising mould and bonded together.



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5.2L V12, 350hp, 240km/h, 15L/100km. 2-door, 5-speed manual. 1994 model. 12 months/100,000 miles warranty.

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— **Very good** —

A flat on the motorway? No need to play the damsel in distress. It's no longer a problem for today's mechanically correct women, says Morag Preston



A tiresome task: but easily fixed by a self-taught woman in the know like Morag Preston

The times they are a changin'

You need neither long arms nor long eyelashes to change a wheel. While knights and damsels in distress are pure fairytale. Women with punctures are out on the hard shoulder, and doing it for themselves.

"I even time myself," says Peta Flint, 37, a sock manufacturer in Nottingham. "I can do it in less than ten minutes. I've always had a mechanical bent and at 18 could change a motorbike wheel. The first time I changed the wheel on a car I was 25, and had just passed my driving test. It was a 1958 Wolseley 1500 that cost £10."

Mrs Flint puts my timing to shame but I can also change a

wheel. My first experience of a puncture was in a hired car, but I was so overcome by the diminutive size of the spare that my co-driver had to take control. I have since practised by myself, spent quality time with my car, and got dirty with the wheel nuts.

There is a feeling of confidence in just knowing that you have a spare wheel, and a sense of excitement in locating the buried treasure. Then it is in with the jack, off with the hub cap, unscrew the nuts, off with the old and, wey-hee, on with the new. Putting back the wheel nuts, there was a satisfaction that almost had me convinced I had constructed the car from scratch.

A birds and bees initiation



Off with the old, on with the new: 'putting back the nuts, there was a sense of satisfaction'

in car maintenance is rare, but it is not always restricted to sons. Some daughters are blessed with DIY dads. "My father would say 'Here are four nuts, here's what fits them, now get on with it,'" says Amber Upton, 25, a desktop publisher living in Worcestershire. "He taught me how to change a wheel on his Austin A35 when I was in my early teens."

Each year, the RAC handles

more than a million breakdown calls from its 2.2 million female members. Last year, 72,500 people called on the RAC to help change a wheel, making it the fourth most popular problem.

According to Mrs Flint: "People don't want to get their hands dirty these days. A lot of men can't change a wheel either, but a simple thing like that should be common knowledge. Women need to be told how easy it is. You don't even need to use your arms — you can use your feet."

Armed with a working jack and faced with wheel nuts that have not been put on too tightly, women are putting some men to shame. "I was driving to a Pink Floyd concert with a boyfriend when I had my first puncture," says Ms Upton. "He just watched as I changed the wheel. It never occurred to him that you could fix a puncture yourself."

Eighty-two per cent of women drivers feel it is important to learn basic car maintenance, according to the RAC, which organises workshops throughout the UK. Emma Braznigan, 26, a writer, attended an evening course in Bristol where members were made to change a wheel. "I was surprised," she says. "I thought it was more difficult."

Carolyn Taylor, 38, a London-based solicitor, says: "It's common sense. The first time I had to change a wheel I was 21 and driving a purple Mini. I was too embarrassed to call out the AA, and wasn't prepared to wait two hours for help, so I read the manual."

Jennifer Pollard, 54, learnt to change a wheel at Kirdford Ladies Club in West Sussex, 20

years ago. "If I was stranded, I didn't want to have to call on mere men. Once the wheel nuts were on too tight, so I had to walk to the nearest garage. They were at lunch, but I borrowed their spider spanner," she says. "The more affluent you become, the more you lose your skills."

Three years ago, Kwik Fit, the tyre and exhaust specialists, introduced a policy to make one in four of its fitters female. "They make first-class fitters," says the company. "They're every bit as good as men. The strength is in the tools."

The real test comes when both partners are in the car and the wheel begins to wobble. Mrs Flint's husband entertains the kids because she is the faster mechanic. Shelley Upton, Amber's mother, is the perfect passenger. Although she does not have a licence, she can change a wheel.

Women tend to drive older cars, especially mothers and students, according to the RAC. "No amount of knowledge compensates for not having the basic equipment," it says. "It's also very handy to carry a piece of carpet to kneel on. Familiarise yourself with the manufacturer's handbook, find the jacking points, practise changing the wheel, and make sure the wheel nuts are not on too tight."

Last word, and a sign of changing times, to Mrs Flint: "Punctures are very annoying. I saw a man stranded on the motorway last week. Once I would have stopped to help, but now I have to consider the children's safety."

DR DASHBOARD

Drive now, pay later — if ever

Q So we're not going to have motorway tolls after all. Why not?

A Because the Government says that the technology is not yet workable. Brian Mawhinney, the Transport Secretary, said this week that tolls would only be introduced "some way in the future, if at all".

Q But there are motorway tolls all over the Continent. Why can't we use the same technology?

A European toll roads rely on "toll plazas" where motorists have to stop and pay. They hand over the money or, on some short stretches, simply throw coins into a bucket. That buys a ticket for a length of motorway. But the Government wants to avoid that method here because it would add to congestion rather than ease it.

Q So you mean the whole exercise is about easing congestion, not raising more tax from the poor old motorists?

A Well, when the plan was first put forward, the Department of Transport said it wanted to raise money to fund road improvements. Scarcity is perfectly understandable, though, since the Treasury admits that less than half the annual £14 billion tax taken from motorists is spent on transport.

Q What is this technology that won't work, then?

A The Government wanted to use a "smart card" system. A driver would buy a card, a bit like a phonecard, and insert it into an electronic unit on the dashboard which would indicate how much credit was available. When the car was driven through a motorway checkpoint, a microwave signal would deduct payments. Drivers would be able to recharge the cards when their credit was used up.

Q That doesn't sound too difficult. What's the problem?

A According to officials, the system has not

proved reliable enough in tests in Germany. There are also problems over drivers using side roads to avoid the checks.

Q Wouldn't motorway tolls have increased traffic through towns and villages anyway?

A That's what the motorway organisations said. Many complain about congestion on the M25, but in Kent and Surrey it is estimated that the opening of the motorway cut traffic through some villages by 60 per cent.

Q Will they scrap existing tolls now?

A I'm afraid not. The tolls on the Severn, Humber and Dartford bridges are special cases.

Q But at least we won't face any more?

A Life isn't that simple. The Severn tolls have just been increased to pay for a second crossing, due to open next year. Work is also under way on the Northern Birmingham Relief Road, which is being built privately and will be funded by tolls.

Q Are there any more like that in the pipeline?

A The decision to scrap tolls doesn't affect the four roads for which the Government has invited tenders from private companies. These include an A1-M1 link in Yorkshire, the Cirencester bypass in Gloucestershire, bridging the A1 up to motorway standard around Peterborough, and improving the A69 by bypassing Haltwhistle in Cumbria. But these won't be paid for through direct tolls on the motorist. The companies will bear the cost of building and maintaining the roads and charge the Government for each vehicle that uses them.

● Even Dr Dashboard makes mistakes. Last week's First Aid advice contained an error. If a casualty is breathing, however noisily, don't give resuscitation, just clear the airways and fetch help.



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Cooking in Italy with Alastair Little

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Welcome to an alternative view of Utopia

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GARDENS



George Plumptre's latest plot revealed

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Harpy or heroine: two lives of Elizabeth Taylor

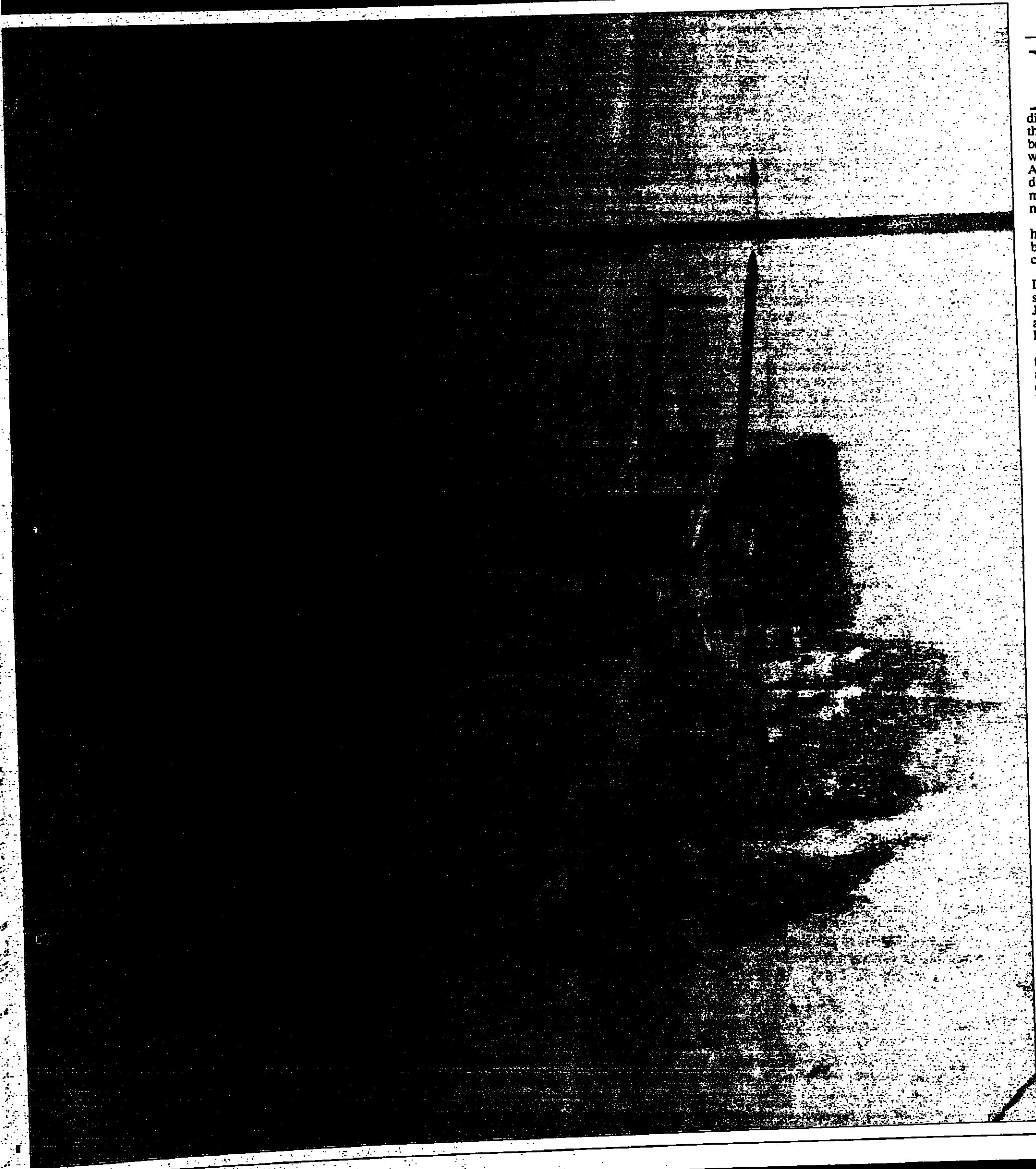
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WEEKEND

CONDEMNED: A CAMBRIDGE BOY'S STORY

By Ben Macintyre



It is June 3, 1983, and Nicky Ingram is hot, drunk, stoned and looking for a house to break into and rob with his best friend, Kevin Plummer, their fourth burglary of the day. Dusty, dingy Cobb County, Georgia, is a far cry from the beauties of Cambridge, where Ingram was born 19 years earlier, but he has come a long way since then, all of it downhill: the move to America, his parents' divorce, flunking school, dismissal from the army for drunkenness, his mother's return to England. No hope, no job, no luck. Typical stuff.

Just this afternoon, his extended family is having a picnic but he has not been invited because he is too depressed and drunk for company these days.

So, after 16 beers apiece and a few tabs of LSD, Ingram and his buddy are looking for someone else to rob. They stop at the house of J.C. and Mary Sawyer, middle-aged acquaintances of their families in this tight-knit, fly-blown Southern town.

After that Ingram can't remember anything, he says, because of the booze. But, according to the prosecutors, he was interrupted mid-robbery by the Sawyers, from whom he stole just \$70 before tying them to a tree in the back garden, screaming at them for half an hour and then shooting them both in the head. Amazingly, Mary Sawyer survived; rather less surprisingly, Ingram was convicted of murder on his 20th birthday, and bundled off to death row or, to be precise, the Georgia Diagnostic and Classification Centre.

In 1983, Ingram was a nobody, a typical backwater hoodlum from a broken family. Now, after 12 years on death row, he is about to become someone very special: barring a last-minute legal appeal, a reprieve by the Georgia Board of Pardons and Paroles or the successful intervention of the British Government, on Thursday night Ingram, 32, will become the first British-born man for 50 years to be executed in the United States, and the first in history to die in the electric chair.

Ingram moved to America with his parents when he was still a baby. His mother is a working-class Englishwoman from Cambridge who met his father, a US Air Force serviceman, when he was stationed at Lakenheath air force base, East Anglia. When the family moved back to Georgia, Nicky Ingram and his older brother retained dual citizenship. The condemned man is trying to pressurise the British Government into intervening on his behalf. His mother, Ann Ingram, has written to John Major begging him to intercede with President Clinton to save her son's life.

But Ingram has already missed two previous appointments with Georgia's electric chair, in 1985 and 1989, and his lawyer is pessimistic about his chances of escaping a third time, even if the British Government steps in. "There is still a chance it's going to work, but it's touch and go," says Clive Stafford Smith, the experienced English death-row lawyer born, strangely, in the same Cambridge hospital as Ingram four years earlier.

Stafford Smith has a litany of reasons why Ingram does not deserve to go to the electric chair: his client is mentally ill, he insists, since Ingram suffers from an "idiosyncratic reaction" to alcohol causing total amnesia, and thus cannot be held accountable for what allegedly happened: his friend Kevin Plummer, who agreed to testify for the prosecution in exchange for immunity, was reportedly found to have a bloody flip-flop in his car, and he allegedly failed a lie

Continued on page 3, col 1



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GALLERIES

Richard Cork

RICHARD AVEDON: Half a century of icy professional photography is on display in Richard Avedon's retrospective. The National Portrait Gallery has given him a lavish sequence of spaces, and Avedon fills them with his often outside images. All black and white, mostly portrait heads, these pictures are the work of a master of coldness. Even the liveliest of his early fashion shots for *Harper's Bazaar* have a glacial perfection about them. And when Avedon trains his zealous lens on elderly men's faces, the unsparing results disclose every wrinkle and fold in their pitted skin. The absence of tenderness can seem cruel, but at its best Avedon's frozen perfection is very satisfying. National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place, London WC2 (0171-306 0059), until June 11.

MARK WALLINGER: Last chance to see a substantial survey of work by a strangely unclassifiable young artist. Mark Wallinger's show at the Ikon Gallery in Birmingham is astonishingly diverse. His paintings of horses are produced with a precision worthy of George Stubbs. But he also makes schoolroom interiors by drawing in chalk on blackboards, and his video installations form a prominent part of the show. Wallinger delights in his unpredictability. He sees no reason why his art should not range over all the possibilities available today, and he even made *A Real Work of Art* by buying a thoroughbred horse which he named and raced — the ultimate example of his fascination with found objects. But Wallinger is equally stimulated by the challenge of realist painting at its most polished.

John Bright St. Birmingham (0121-643 0708), until Apr 11, then at the **Serpentine Gallery**, Kensington Gardens, London W2 (0171-402 6075) from May 10 to June 11.

MUSEUMS

John Russell Taylor

LIVING ROOM: Nick Waplington is justly renowned for his ability to get close to the subjects of his colour photographs, without getting too close. His chosen ground is English suburbia, and in his *Living Room* series he explores the way people actually live, every day and on special occasions. He is finely unpromising, but his observation is sometimes ironic or even malicious. Does he make himself so inconspicuous that no one remembers he is there? Or are his subjects happy to be complicit, like the contestants in television's weirder talk and game shows? Either way the results are curiously compelling.

Nottingham Castle Museum and Art Gallery, Nottingham (0115 9483504), daily 10am-5.45pm, until May 21.

COLOUR AND NATURE: Patrick Heron and Bridget Riley might not at first seem likely stablemates, she with her mathematical exactitudes, but then they are both abstract painters, and more important, they share a delight in brilliant, even lurid colours. This perceived confluence of interest is no doubt the basis of this touring exhibition from the Tate Gallery collection. And in fact the two painters complement each other very well. Even if he could not go along with precisely what they are doing, Matisse would recognise them both.

Nottingham Castle Museum, Norwich (01603 223624), Mon to Sat, 10am-5pm; Sun, 2-5pm. The exhibition runs until June 4.

JAZZ

Clive Davis

DIANNE REEVES/JOHN PIZZARELLI: The singers take charge this week. As the bopish Betty Carter enters the second week of her residency at Ronnie Scott's in Soho, her fellow-American, Dianne



Multi-octave: Dianne Reeves

Reeves, arrives for a rare British tour. Blessed with a stunning multi-octave voice, Reeves has sometimes been almost too versatile for her own good, succumbing to the temptation to cross over to a bland soul-pop formula. Her new album, *Quiet After The Storm*, finds her going back to her jazz roots, with impressive results.



An outside image of Twiggy, taken in 1968, dominates the Richard Avedon retrospective at the National Portrait Gallery in London

Meanwhile, John Pizzarelli, a genial son of New Jersey, is a promising contender in the Harry Cornick Jr laid-back crooner stakes, though it is his swing guitar playing which really catches the ear. On *Dear Mr Cole*, his latest recording, he tips his hat in the direction of Nat "King" Cole. **Reeves: Jazz Café**, Parkway, London NW1 (0171-916 6000), Wed 5 to Fri 7; **Everyman Theatre**, 59 Hope Street, Liverpool (0151-709 4776), Sun 9.

Pizzarelli: Ronnie Scott's, Broad St, Birmingham (0121-643 4523), Mon 3 to Sat 8; **Pizza on the Park**, Knightsbridge, London SW1 (0171-235 5273), Sun 9 to Sat 22.

KATHY STOBART

Today is the 70th birthday of one of the few women to have broken into the fraternity of saxophone players. Like Barbara Thompson, Kathy Stobart requires no special pleading: her work, covering the spectrum of styles, speaks for itself. A bandleader in her own right for many years, she also brought her distinctive sound to the Humphrey Lyttelton band. Colleagues from the past and present will be turning out for her birthday tribute. Art Themen, Harry Beckett, Campbell Burnap, Jimmy Skidmore and — naturally — Lyttelton himself will take to the bandstand for the party. **100 Club**, Oxford St, London W1 (0171-636 0993), Tue 4, 8pm.

OPERA

Rodney Milnes

LIFE WITH AN IDIOT: The English National Opera prudently

warns punters that their British premiere of Schmittke's opera contains "scenes of physical and sexual violence" that may offend some people, but the offence is of course derisory compared to that caused by 80 years of tyranny in Russia, the subject of this oblique and grotesque parable. A married couple is forced to take the eponymous idiot into their home; he is called Vova (Lenin's pet name) and the domestic violence is a metaphor for what happened to a whole people, described via the absurdist tradition of Russian literature stretching from Gogol to Kharmis. Jonathan Moore and David Blight (director and designer) also gave us the memorable *ENO Greek*, so anything may happen. The conductor is Richard Armstrong. **Coliseum**, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (0171-632 8300), to-night, Fri 7, 7.30pm.

SIEGFRIED: One of the many strengths of Richard Jones's stunning production of the third segment of Wagner's *Ring* cycle is that it clarifies some of the mysteries that caused such a flurry when the first two were unveiled last year: the whole enterprise is emerging as one of the landmark Ring productions of the postwar period — and how nice that it should be happening in London. There is no mystery about the brilliance of Bernard Haitink's conducting, or about individual performances of pole-axing power, especially John Tomlinson's anguished Wotan and Graham Clark's mesmerisingly evil transvestite dwarf. **Royal Opera House**, Bow St, London WC2 (0171-304 4000), to-day, 4pm; Tues 4, 5.30pm.

CLASSICAL

Richard Morrison

NYMAN AT LARGE: The musical world divides sharply into those who revere Michael Nyman after his work on Jane Campion's *The Piano* and will be thronging to the South Bank's three-week celebration of the minimalist composer, and those who feel that Nyman's loud and repetitive music has all the allure of an electric lawnmower without the cutting-edge. The jamboree begins next Friday with an all-night session in which films with Nyman soundtracks — most notably such arty Peter Greenaway classics as *A Zed and Two Nothings* — will be screened "from 9pm to breakfast". Staggering bleary-eyed out of that, you have a few hours to recover before the Michael Nyman Band blasts into action at the



Film composer Michael Nyman

Festival Hall. Later, the festival includes many Nyman scores never before heard in Britain.

South Bank, London SE1 (0171-928 8800), Apr 7 to Apr 29.

ZELENKA AFTER 250 YEARS: The music of the Bohemian composer Jan Dismas Zelenka, who died 250 years ago, has come to the fore recently, and rightly so. It is melodious and quirky, and shot through with a strangely romantic aura. At the Wigmore Hall soloists from the excellent Chamber Orchestra of Europe mix some of his sonatas with those of his slightly more famous contemporary, Johann Sebastian Bach. **Wigmore Hall**, London W1 (0171-935 2141), Apr 6, 7.30pm.

ROCK

David Sinclair

JANET JACKSON: She may be the youngest of the nine Jackson siblings, but 28-year-old Janet yields only to Michael in popularity. Her last album, *Janet*, topped the charts in both Britain and America, and the two before that — *Control* and *Janet Jackson's Rhythm Nation 1814* — sold eight million copies each. Her shows are enjoyable as much for the dance routines and visual presentations as for anything she sings, *per se*. Although big on themes of self-empowerment, Jackson tends to confuse sex with soul. This promises to be an event with a high quota of bumping and grinding. **Sheffield Arena** (0114 2565656), Apr 4; **NEC**, Birmingham (0121-780 4133), Apr 7; **London Arena**, E14 (0171-538 1212), Apr 8; **Wembley Arena**, Middlesex (0181-900 1234), Apr 19, 20, 22.

THE BOO RADLEYS: Taking their name from a character in Harper Lee's novel, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, the Boo Radleys started out six years ago in Liverpool and are now the toast of the British indie-pop circuit. As well as their geographical links with the Beatles, the Boo Radleys share certain stylistic similarities, and their new album, *Wake Up!*, is teeming with catchy melodies and traditional harmony vocals. The four-man group, led by guitarist and songwriter Martin Carr and fronted by singer Sica, is joined on stage by keyboard player Ed Ball and a brass section. **Riverside**, Newcastle (0191-261 4386), Apr 3; **Garage**, Glasgow (0141-332 1120), Apr 4; **Irish Centre**, Leeds (0113 244 2999), Apr 5; **Manchester University** (0161-632 1111), Apr 7; **Leeds Hall**, Sheffield (0114 2754500), Apr 8; **Junetown**, Cambridge (01223 412600), Apr 9; **Wulfrun Hall**, Wolverhampton (01902 312030), Apr 10; **Pyramids Centre**, Portsmouth (01705 338608), Apr 12; **Astoria**, London WC2 (0171-434 0403), Apr 13; **Shepherds Bush Empire**, London W12 (0181-740 7474), Apr 29.

DANCE

John Percival

CHAMBER BALLET PRAGUE: The most celebrated Czech choreographer, Jiří Kylián, made a present of his Dvořák ballet, *Evening Songs*, to this company from his homeland, and they perform it for the first time in London during their very welcome week at Sadler's Wells. The rest of the repertoire is all by their founding director, Pavel Smock, a choreographer of rare feeling and directness in his mixture of folk, classic and modern dance, almost always to music by Czech composers. **Sadler's Wells Theatre**, Rosebery Avenue, London EC1 (0171-713 6000), Tues 4 to Fri 7 at 7.30pm, Sat 8, at 4pm and 8pm.

MARK MORRIS: The last week of his first British tour has a varied programme. It ranges from a strange, gripping ensemble work, set to the contemporary American composer Lou Harrison's *Grand Duo*, to Morris's light-hearted, light-footed solo on Gertrude's *Three Preludes*, taking in all the *Brans New Love Song Waltzes* and country-and-western songs by Bob Willis. **Grand Theatre**, Blackpool (01283 28372), today at 7.30pm; **Birmingham Rep** (0121-236 4455), Tues 4 and Wed 5 at 7.30pm.

Benedict Nightingale

Benedict Nightingale

TWELFTH NIGHT: Ian Judge's warm revival, which delighted all but chronic curmudgeons at Stratford last year, launches what promises to be a strong London season for the RSC. The pleasures include Emma Fielding's tiny, touching Viola and Desmond Barratt as a Malvolio with a face like a rhino high on battery acid. **Barbican**, Silk Street, London EC2 (0171-638 8891), Now previewing, 7.15pm; matinees: today, Wed 3, 2pm; opens Thu 6, 7pm; then Mon-Sat, 7.15pm; matinees: Apr 13, 15, 2pm; in repertoire from Apr 20.

DANGEROUS CORNER: Have you ever wished you had the chance to relive a day, an hour, a moment that had disastrous repercussions? That is the subject of J.B. Priestley's thriller, morally a less earnest piece than *An Inspector Calls*, but just as ingenious and tensely plotted. **Whitehall**, Whitehall, London SW1 (0171-369 1735), Evenings at 8pm; matinees: Wed at 3pm, Sat at 5pm.

• More theatre, page 6.

FILMS

Geoff Brown

FIORILE (12): No match for the Taviani brothers' best work, though even a diluted film by the master Italian story-tellers contains enough limpid beauty, social observations and human warmth to delight the viewer. Interviewed males trace the 200-year history of a Tuscan family dogged by the curse of gold stolen from the coffers of Napoleon's army. The scale is epic, but there is no spectacular visual display. With Galatea Ranzi, Claudio Bigagli, Michael Vartan. **Everyman** (0171-435 1525); **MGM Tottenham Crt Rd** (0171-636 6148); **Minaema** (0171-235 4225).

THE MADNESS OF KING GEORGE (PG): Nigel Hawthorne reigns supreme as George III, racked with agonies mental, physical and political in the film version of Alan Bennett's play. **Barbican** (0171-638 8891); **Chelsea** (0171-351 3742); **Gate** (0171-727 4043); **Lumiere** (0171-836 0690); **MGMs: Haymarket** (0171-839 1527); **Tottenham Crt Rd** (0171-636 6148); **Odeon Kensington** (01426 914666); **Screen/Hill** (0171-435 3366); **UCI Whiteleys** (0171-732 3332); **Warner** (0171-437 4343).

• More films, page 6.

LONDON

Poor But Clever: Hear stories about children who had no money but who used their wits to win in the game of life. **Ragged School Museum**, 46-48 Copperfield Road, Bow, E3 (0181-980 6405). Tomorrow, 2.15-2.45pm (ages 3-6), 3-4pm (age 6 and over). Free.

The Three Billy Goats Gruff and Other Tales: Stories, songs and rhymes including the tale of Asop's race between the hare and the tortoise told with rod puppets. **Puppet Theatre Barge**, Little Venice, Blomfield Road, W9 (0171-249 6876). Tomorrow, and every Sat and Sun in Apr, until daily Apr 15-23, 3pm. Tickets adults £5, children £4.50.

CORNWALL

Tintagel Castle: Explore the ruins and walkways of the legendary birthplace of King Arthur. You may recognise the ruins from the television series, *The Buccaneers*. **Tintagel Castle**, Tintagel (01840 770329). Open daily, 10am-6pm. Admission: adults £2.20, children £1.10.

OXFORDSHIRE

Living History 1645: See the Manor as it was in 1645 during the English Civil War. **Sulgrave Manor**, Sulgrave, Banbury (01295 760225). Today until Sat 9, 10.30am-5pm; next Sun, 10.30am-5pm. Admission: adults £3.80, children £1.90, family £11.

SCOTLAND

The Puppet and Animation Festival: See *The Adventures of Peter Rabbit* and *Benjamin Bunny* or the story of *The Tailor of Gloucester* performed by Ian Turbitt's Puppet Theatre (ages 4-8). Enjoy *Major Mustard's Travelling Show* (different shows for ages 3-12) and *The Adventures of Ivan the Slug* (age 5 and over). There is also Oscar Wilde's classic, *The Selfish Giant* (age 5 and over). When *I Met Skark*, performed by Lempen Puppets (age 5 and over) and *The Tragical Comedy of Macbeth*, a funny version of Macbeth (age 7 and over). Plus lots of workshops. Events taking place across Edinburgh, East and West Lothian, Stirling and Clydesdale. For information contact: **The Netherbow**, 43-45 High Street, Edinburgh (0131-556 9579).



Lempen Puppets perform When I Met Skark

Animal Handling Classes: Close encounters with snakes, frogs, stick insects and hamsters. **Edinburgh Zoo**, Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh (0131-334 9171). Mon-Sat, 9am-5pm; Sun, 9.30am-5pm. Admission: adults £5.50, children £2.80, family £14.50. Classes 70p. Booking advisable.

SHROPSHIRE

Boscobel House and Royal Oak: Discover the secret hiding places in this house used by the fugitive King Charles II after the battle of Worcester in 1651. Find the Royal Oak, the tree where he is supposed to have hidden as Cromwell's troops searched below. **Boscobel House**, near Wolverhampton (01902 850244). Open daily, 10am-6pm. Admission: adults £3.30, children £1.70.

YORKSHIRE

The Wonderful World of Horses: An entertaining performance by the dancing white stallions following the traditions of the Spanish Riding School of Vienna. **Sheffield Arena**, Broughton Lane, Sheffield (0114 256 5656). Today, 2pm, 7.30pm; tomorrow, 2pm. Tickets: adults from £9.50, children from £9.50; **Wembley Arena**, Empire Way, Wembley, Middlesex (0181-900 1234). Wed 5, Thur 6, 7.30pm. Tickets: adults from £12.50, children from £9.50.

Exhibition of Dolls Houses and Furniture: Nunnington Hall, Nunnington, York (01439 748283). Opens today, Tues-Thur, Sat, Sun, 2pm-5pm. Admission: adults £3.50, children £1.50, family (2 adults and 3 children) £7.

HEATHER ALSTON

Ruth Gledhill hears a judgment delivered at Lincoln's Inn Chapel, central London

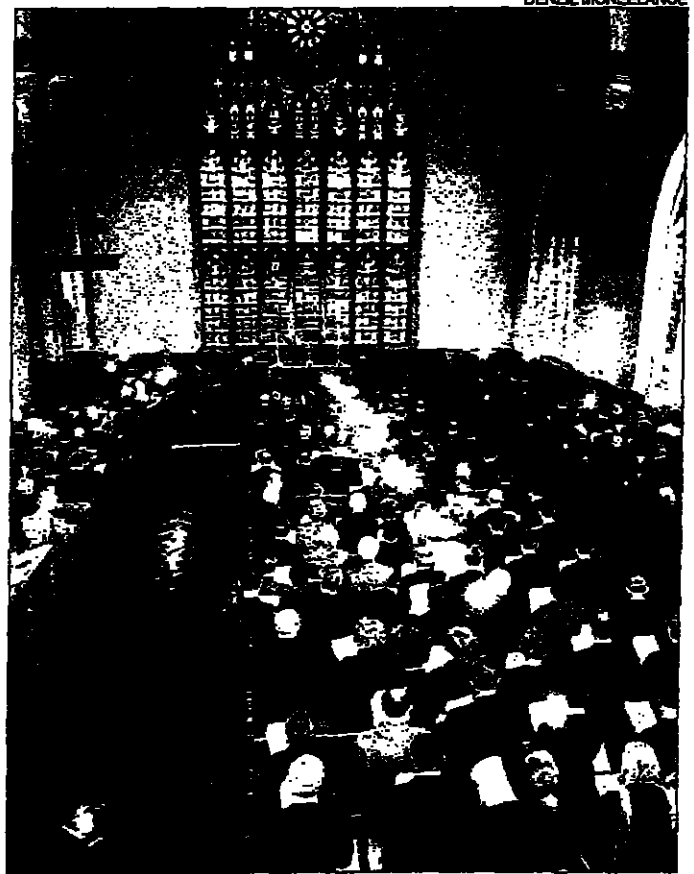
AT YOUR SERVICE



WE must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, the Bible warns, but nothing had prepared me for such a day of judgment among earthly judges and barristers, including the Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay of Clashfern, at Lincoln's Inn. It was only when Bishop Michael Marshall, adviser on evangelism to the Archbishop of Canterbury, dared to stand up to deliver a judgment of his from the pulpit, that I believed the psalmist's words, that God judgeth the righteous and is angry with the wicked.

Bishop Marshall was nominated by a Member of the Inn for the *Times* Preacher of the Year Award after he delivered what was the first in a series of sermons, titled "Wigs and Mitres", on the church, law and judiciary. The setting could not have been more appropriate. We sat in the original pews made in 1623 by "Price the Joiner", although behind us the bell, captured in 1596 at the siege of Cadiz, was silent. By custom the bell is tolled whenever a Lincoln's Inn bench has died, and is thought to have inspired John Donne's words: "Never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee." Donne was preacher to Lincoln's Inn before he became Dean of St Paul's.

The present preacher, Canon Norman, one of the few clergy still able truly to intone, seemed almost to be passing sentence as he opened with words from Psalm 143: "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." The sense of impending doom magnified: "Dearly beloved, the Scripture moveth us in sundry ways to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness, and that we should not dissemble nor cloak them before the face of Almighty God."



The large congregation of judges, barristers and their families

The congregation, which normally averages 50 barristers, judges, students and their families, was unusually large at 250 because of solicitors and members of Inns of Court who had come to hear the bishop. "How long will ye give wrong judgment: and accept the persons of the ungodly," we sang in the psalm, and listened to the lesson from *Romans*, where St Paul argues that the Christian's duty to God involves obedience to the State.

Bishop Marshall preached on the "schizoid fragmentation of the way we see the world" and warned of the rising "flood waters of anarchy and self-destruction". He said: "Once upon a time,

religion, religious truth and justice, Wigs and Mitres, were packaged in the same compartment. In the public truth category along with scientific truth, medical truth and the laws of the universe." Since the Enlightenment, they had been transferred to another department labelled "private opinion". Now, "we are supposed to believe that religion, ethics and morality and therefore by implication, justice itself, are better not taught at all, but rather put on hold until youngsters are old enough to make up their own minds." He said: "Truth and beauty really do belong together in the same way that lies and ugliness also belong together. So

the call for law and order is not the slogan and propaganda of right-wing reactionaries. Rather, law and order are the basic prerequisites for the upbuilding of a civilised and civil society." His warnings became more apocalyptic as he neared the end: "As we were reminded in a similar crisis in our national history, all that is needed for evil to flourish is for good men and women to do nothing," he said, arguing that the church was necessary for the common wealth. He released us at last, but only when he reached the end of his final sentence, with the word "Amen".

The second sermon in the series *Wigs and Mitres* will be preached at Lincoln's Inn by the Right Rev Hugh Montefiore, former Bishop of Birmingham, on November 26, 1995, 11.30am. All services, which take place during legal term only, are open to the public.

Lincoln's Inn Chapel, The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn, London, WC2A 3TL. Tel: 0171-405 1393.

DEAN OF THE CHAPEL: The Hon Mr Justice Drake

PREACHER OF LINCOLN'S INN: Canon Bill Norman

ARCHITECTURE: Perpendicular Gothic with a bleakly Dickensian feel, and reminiscent of the High Court. ***

MUSIC: Music by Bach, Elgar, traditional hymns and mixed voluntary choir. ****

LITURGY: Morning Prayer from the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. *****

AFTER-SERVICE CARE: Coffee before, judicious lunch in the Great Hall afterwards. Every Sunday after the service, the congregation is invited to join the Masters of the Bench and Members of the Inn in the Benchers' Rooms. *****

SPIRITUAL HIGH: A chance to examine our own consciences, with God as our judge. *****

* stars are awarded to five.

I believe the sentence is going to be carried out. I believe that the day the judge said it in court.

هكرام الله

COVER STORY

3

continued from page 1
 detector test. Mrs Sawyer said her attacker had long hair and a hairy chest, while Ingram said neither; none of Ingram's fingerprints was ever found in the Sawyers' house, while his clothes revealed no blood.

Then there are procedural objections. According to Stafford Smith, most of the jurors who convicted Ingram believed he would never be executed, expecting instead that, like so many other death row cases, his would simply get bogged down in endless appeals. The Supreme Court rejected that line of argument last month.

None of this has altered the view of the Georgia courts that he is guilty beyond "reasonable doubt" and, barring the unexpected, Nicky Ingram's life will end next week in a most dramatic and unpleasant way. Just before 7pm, he will be removed from the cell next to the death chamber where he has remained, on suicide watch, since his execution date was set. His blond hair and legs will be shaved to ensure proper contact with the moistened copper electrodes; he will be secured to the wooden chair by leather straps, a metal clamp placed around his forehead and a mask fixed over his face.

A prison official will then throw the switch to send a 1,000-volt shock through the 5ft 8in of Ingram's body for 30 seconds, followed by a 2,400-volt shock for 60 seconds. This will be repeated automatically by machine until a doctor confirms there is no pulse. Outside the prison, death-penalty enthusiasts will cheer — as they have 18 times since Georgia reintroduced capital punishment in 1976 — and the 113 men still on Georgia's death row will hear them.

The electric shocks cause cardiac arrest and respiratory paralysis, but death can take up to 30 minutes depending on how effectively an individual's body conducts electricity, while the condemned man literally fries inside and out. Observers report the smell of burning flesh and smoke rising from the body. The brain reaches a temperature of 60°C. Since 1977, there have been seven botched executions by electrocution, in which the prisoner did not die after the first electric charge, including one in Georgia. Research suggests that, even when a condemned prisoner's limbs stop working after the first electric shock, he still feels pain and is aware of what is happening.

The electric chair was introduced in America in 1888, on the grounds that it was more humane than hanging. Since then, many states — including New York, which only recently reintroduced the death penalty but still leads the historical tally of executions, followed by Georgia — have adopted lethal injection as a quicker and less shocking execution technique than "Old Sparky".

As one of his last-ditch strategies, Stafford Smith has filed a suit against the US Department of Corrections, claiming Georgia's method of execution is inhumane and violates Ingram's civil rights. Dr Harold Hillman, a neurobiologist at the University of Surrey, is expected to testify that electrocution is similar in effect to "burning someone alive". But after fighting some 200 cases on behalf of Southern death row inmates, the English lawyer admits he is clutching at straws.

Whether or not electrocution is a "cruel and unusual punishment" and thus technically outlawed under the US constitution, it is certainly expensive. According to the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, the average execution, including trials, appeals and an average of eight years in prison, costs \$2.3 million, while a life sentence of 40 years in prison costs under \$700,000.

But the expense, the "barbarity of this medieval torture" in Stafford Smith's words, and the lingering uncertainty over Ingram's conviction do not trouble Michael Bowers, the attorney-general for Georgia. Bowers will witness the execution, along with a handful of observers from the judiciary, the press and the prison service, not because he has to, but because he wants to. He has no qualms about going ahead with the execution. At his side will be his fellow observers, picked by a list of authorities from a list of volunteers. "Why should I have any difficulties with it? He's violated the law, he's been given more due process than in English law, he's committed a heinous murder and he deserves to be executed. I don't have much sympathy for the guy," Bowers says.

Perhaps oddly, another person who feels that "if it were done when 'is done, then there would be no quick" is Ingram himself.

"He hates what they do to

him in prison, and at this point he just wants to get it over with one way or the other," Stafford Smith said. In an interview last month with Stafford Smith, Ingram indicated that he expects to die. "I believe the sentence is going to be carried out. I've believed that since the day the jury said it in court," he says. On Georgia's death row, knitting needles are not permitted, so Ingram spends his time crocheting presents for his family. Sometimes he writes gum poetry to his English pen-pal, 66-year-old Betty de Fazio. For 12 years, Ingram has lived 21 out of every 24 hours in his single cell, measuring six feet by nine feet. He has only seen his mother and other visitors through a scratched Perspex screen. He has never been allowed to do any work in prison and, recently, his twice-

weekly visits to the exercise yard were stopped. Ingram has even been denied the traditional condemned man's last request after Georgia banned cigarette sales in its prisons at the start of the year. "Nick's a smoker, but we haven't been allowed to bring him any tobacco," complains another of his lawyers, Jeffrey Eitel. When Ingram's best friend Tom Stephens — whom he met on death row after Stephens was convicted of being an accomplice to murder — went to the chair on June 29, 1993, Ingram was distraught. "Nicky wanted to go in to the execution chamber for him," Stafford Smith says. "Everyone knew he did not take anyone's life," Ingram told his lawyer. "Tom was just a kind man, you know."

Stafford Smith admits that at the time of the Sawyer murder, Ingram was wild and criminal, a disaster waiting to happen. "He's had 12 years to sit and think, and he's a very different person, very quiet and reflective. He's not a Christian, but he's very spiritual. He has strong beliefs in some sort of afterlife." Ingram also claims to have transformed. "I have missed everything I would have liked to have experienced... I'm not the crazy, drunk kid that I was," he says. He has learned other things too, on death row: such as the fact that electrocuted inmates are swiftly cremated, so that their families do not see the physical effects on the human body of 2,400 volts administered in regular bursts. He has also heard the rumours, which the prison authorities seldom trouble to deny, that the electrocutions will sometimes make the chair "malfunction" to increase the pain for "uncooperative" death row inmates. Whether true or not, it is a

ture, just three years before the murder. Mr and Mrs Ingram have since remarried in order to face their own and their son's ordeal together. "Ann Ingram has such a guilt complex for leaving him," Stafford Smith says. "Now she's really trying to do the motherly thing."

In an emotional letter to John Major last week, Ann Ingram wrote: "I feel tremendous guilt and pain because I was not there for him enough when he was a child... it is unimaginable, and makes me cry every time I think about it, that the state of Georgia wants to put my Nicky into a chair and roast him to death with 2,400 volts of electricity."

She concluded: "Nicky and I are at the mercy of the Americans, but I do not believe the Americans will be merciful unless someone with more power and influence than me asks for clemency."

On Wednesday, the day that Ingram finally learns if his execution will be carried out, Mr Major will leave America after a three-day visit during which he may, but probably will not, raise the question of Ingram's execution with the Clinton administration. Anti-death penalty campaigners claim that a similar punishment inflicted on a British-born individual in any other country would be likely to prompt the most vociferous objections, but that a desire to ensure a diplomatically tranquil visit by Mr Major to Washington may preclude any reference to the subject.

It seems strange that a story beginning in the small-town obscurity of rural Georgia should end up as the stuff of international diplomacy, for the tale of Nicky Ingram is classic America made real. Even Ingram's own words are Southern lachrymose. Gothic the boy born to the fens of England, went to America, and to the bad, was condemned to be killed after a killing, and now stares out of his death-row cell. He looks past the razor-wire and concrete of the prison yard "Off in the distance there's a line of trees. But you can watch the sunset," he says.

Cover: "Electric Chair" by ANDY WARHOL © ARS, New York and DACS, London, 1995/ Bridgeman Art Library Nicky Ingram on death row by SOUTH COAST Ann Ingram in Georgia by JUSTIN SUTCLIFFE



After spending nearly 12 years on death row in Georgia, British-born Nicky Ingram, 32, is to be sent to the electric chair on Thursday evening



Nicky's mother, Ann Ingram, last week wrote to John Major asking him to intervene in the case

Major's dilemma: whether or not to intervene

JOHN MAJOR has consistently refused to get involved in the case of Nicky Ingram. Ingram's lawyers have appealed to the Prime Minister to plead for clemency when he meets President Clinton in Washington next week, but Downing Street has made it clear that this will be unlikely. Foreign Office officials point out that the British Government usually takes the view that its citizens must expect to be subject to the laws of the country where they live, even if that includes capital punishment, flogging or life imprisonment for drug trafficking, and there are no precedents. But Foreign Office Minister of State, Douglas Hogg, has not completely ruled out a last-minute plea. He says:

"We are waiting for all legal avenues to be exhausted before deciding whether to consider an appeal for clemency. Due legal process has not yet been completed and it would not be appropriate for us to intervene at this stage. However, we continue to watch the case." But other issues, such as Ireland, will be considered of far greater importance when the Prime Minister makes his visit to Washington and, even if he does manage to raise the case, Foreign Office officials and even Amnesty International are unsure if it can make any difference because the final decision about clemency rests with Georgia, not the White House.

ALICE THOMSON

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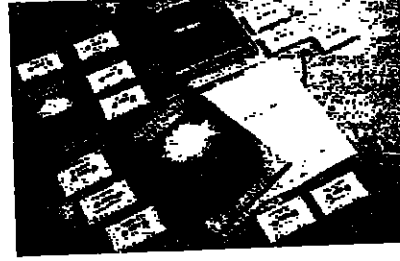
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ARTS

5

Another winner for critics to hate

That cricket-loving lyricist, Sir Tim Rice, appears to have displaced the sadly hapless Stephen Fry as Most Hated Lyricist of the Month. This week he won an Oscar — his second in three years, and one of only four picked up by Britain. But to judge from the venom of the newspaper coverage, you would have thought that he had trampled Hugh Grant and violated Elizabeth Hurley. Or even vice versa.

We could have done without the Oscar awarded to Elton John and Tim Rice for the surly, if popular, song *You Can Feel The Love Tonight* from *The Lion King*. Derek Malcolm snuffed in *The Guardian*. "It may encourage further excesses of bland music-making and clichéd lyrics."

Well, it might. Presumably the fastidious Mr. Malcolm would prefer Sir Harrison Birtwhistle to be engaged to write songs for Disney films. On the other hand, Rice's Oscar might encourage other British writers and performers to believe that they, too, can compete

with America's finest and carry off the trophies. I admire Rice. There, I've written it and I don't regret it. He has survived a partnership with Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber. He has survived an even more strenuous partnership with Elaine Paige. He has survived the disaster of *Blondie* — the world's first musical about the Crusades, and almost certainly the last. He has even survived the humiliation of *Chess*'s debacle on Broadway: "a cock-up of cataclysmic proportions," as he once delicately and only too accurately described it.

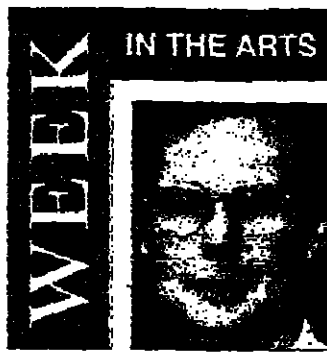
Now he has stopped being a half-forgotten survivor and started becoming a ubiquitous winner. What's more, he has done it without pandering to the Hollywood gush-machine. In the run-up to his win at the 1993 Oscars, for instance, he was memorably ab-

sent on more important business. "Where's Tim when all this is happening to him?" asked an incredulous Lloyd Webber. "He's off in South Africa watching bloody cricket."

This time, he did get to Los Angeles, only to baffle the whole of America, and delight fellow Englishmen, with an acceptance speech in which he thanked Denis Compton for inspiration. For that, we can forgive him even *Blondie*.

Undifying spectacle of the decade? That will be the moment when Lord Gowrie, chairman of the Arts Council, hands over a £45 million lottery cheque to pay for a building designed by his own deputy chairman, Sir Richard Rogers.

We have not reached that stage yet — but almost. The biggest lottery allocation announced by



RICHARD MORRISON

the Arts Council on Thursday was the £80,000 to the South Bank for "project development". And the project to be developed? It is Rogers' amusing scheme to build a "crystal palace" over the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and

Hayward Gallery. A scheme that will one day require a further £45 million of lottery cash.

Why it costs a million quid to do a "feasibility study" is something you must ask an architect to explain. The real point is that the Arts Council appears to be giving a massive (and very profitable) thumbs-up to the architectural firm of its own deputy chairman.

Not for a moment do I suggest impropriety. I am sure that Rogers left the room at the appropriate time, that "Chinese walls" were in place, that nothing was fixed over a Hampstead dinner table, that not a single nod and certainly no winks were exchanged.

I also accept that talented practitioners, such as Rogers, should serve on the Arts Council. But surely, in this instance, the phrase "such as Rogers" is significantly different from "Rogers himself".

The public has put huge sums into the lottery. Decisions about how that loot is distributed should be as transparent as Rogers' crystal palace. Lord Gowrie should find himself a new deputy chairman — preferably one of the 20 million people who have lost on the lottery, rather than a chap destined to be the biggest winner.

Of all the noble things to come out of lotteries, it is the Sydney Opera House that sticks in most people's minds. You don't even have to be Australian to regard it as one of the century's great buildings — though it probably helps.

The question is: how much greater could it have been if its young Danish architect, Jørn Utzon, had been allowed to design its interiors as well as its majestic exterior? In the event, he was

forced out in 1966, ostensibly because of rising costs, and three Australian architects did an all-too-routine completion of the four theatres inside Utzon's shell.

Now, in a rare act of anointment, Australians are flocking to an exhibition which spectacularly answers this crucial question. Using computer wizardry, *The Unseen Utzon* presents a film of the interior as Utzon envisaged it. And startlingly beautiful it is, too.

The exhibition also proves that the excuse at the time — "Utzon's interiors are unbuildable" — was untrue. It was politics, not faulty design, that brought Utzon down. The parallel with St Paul's Cathedral — an undeniably fine building, but nothing like as breathtaking as Wren first envisaged it — is striking.

Poor Utzon. His second most famous building, the Kuwait Parliament, was blown up during the Gulf War. Now a frail 76, he has never returned to Sydney to see his fabulous Opera House complete — and has vowed that he never will.

Don't watch this space

THEATRE: The Blue Ball at the Cottesloe fails to achieve lift-off with Benedict Nightingale

We all know that American astronauts can zoom through space, and even touch down on the Moon, yet send back dispatches that make a trip on the Piccadilly Line through the drab old suburbs to grey old Heathrow seem colourful and adventurous by comparison. Unfortunately, Paul Godfrey is not merely preoccupied with that paradox. His new play manages, surely inadvertently, to parallel it.

Off he went to Houston to watch a launching and, as he says in the introduction to the text, discover how "an experience so fundamentally wondrous as our first forays into space could appear from a derided 'mundane' in such a short time". Since he appears in the finished piece as a certain Paul Godfrey, who is researching a play for the National Theatre, it is reasonable to assume that he conducted interviews with astronauts and astronauts' relatives not unlike those reproduced in *The Blue Ball* itself.

And what does he end up telling us? Not a lot more than that it is awfully hard to write an exciting play about people as uninteresting and inarticulate as astronauts.

He could have reached the same conclusion in an office at the National, but maybe not

Dexter Fletcher as Alex and Pooky Quesnel as Anna, in Paul Godfrey's new play about astronauts, *The Blue Ball*

quite so authoritatively. He could have stayed at home and phoned some spacefolk long-distance; but then he might have missed the few moments his play comes to something approximating dramatic life. These occur after William Armstrong's astronaut admits that space-travel is much more perilous than anybody likes to admit, and his wife — in Gabrielle Lloyd's performance an affectionate, supportive woman — goes mildly apoplectic, shouting "How can I live with

my imagination when I discover the facts are worse?" Yet whether even this happened is unclear. Indeed, whether anything reported in the play was actually said is uncertain, for Peter Darling, who plays Godfrey in awesomely earnest mode, assures his subjects that "I won't quote or portray you". The play comes across as a documentary with imaginary episodes cut into the factual reportage, but it may be fiction from first to last. And what is the purpose of this sub-Pirandellian muddle? Search me.

For what it's worth, the obviously fictional scenes involve Dexter Fletcher as a stolid, robotic spaceman called Alex, Pooky Quesnel as his ambitious but nervous wife, and a dauntingly crewcut Nigel Terry as his grim, driven controller. It seems that he was chosen for a pioneering mission because he combined technological efficiency with

personal mediocrity. It also emerges that, now he has spent his hour rocketing about the void, his future will be as blank as his past was. In other words, we learn as much of moment about him as about the "real" astronaut who tells Godfrey that space-travel is "more incredible than you can imagine", then proudly admits she has no imagination at all.

That makes for a momentarily amusing contradiction, but also helps explain why the play is so flat. Even the admirable Trevor Peacock, who appears late in the day as one of the profession's oldersters, fails to sharpen up the dramatic geography. He is, he says, "a goal-oriented person who fulfilled his aspirations in one shot", and is left to do little but daydream on a low income. Godfrey himself directs, on a set furnished with bar stools, over which planetary orbs hover. But why?

growing inaudibly below strings and woodwind. This was no fault of Christine Cairns, who gave a lovely performance when her voice was liberated in a more comfortable tessitura.

Ad Ora Incerta is a wonderfully effective, moving work, and the composer drew some long-breathed, sympathetic playing from the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

The remaining two items, Rimsky-Korsakov's *May Night Overture* and Tchaikovsky's *Manfred Symphony*, were conducted by Alexander Lazarev. Both performances showed a feeling for orchestral colour, but *Manfred* requires rather more. Its Byronic inspiration demands fiery rhetoric and turbulent emotions. The players did well to get round the notes of this difficult score, with only minor mishaps, but one was hardly swept away on a wave of passion — until the finale, when at last the spirits soared with a truly celestial vision.

BARRY MILLINGTON

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament

JOSEPH FIENNES

Profession: Actor

Age: 24

Where have we heard that name before? Fiennes was in the West End a year ago with Helen Mirren in *A Month in the Country*. His Belyaev was judged to have "just the right gangly charm".

Is that it? Before that, he was lifted out of drama school to play the arrogant Actor in the two-hander hit, *The Woman in Black*.

Isn't there something else? He is about to score his West End hit in *A View from the Bridge*, transferring to the Strand Theatre. Fiennes is the gaily lovable Rodolpho who inspires dangerous jealousy.

But that surname? Oh, all right. Joseph is Ralph Fiennes's brother.

Did Ralph, seven years older, inspire him to act? "Not as such." He has been acting since primary school. Moreover, far from romanticising an actor's life, he "knew the reality. And I



is involved in film direction. Sophie works in production (with Peter Greenaway among others). Roll over the Redgraves. The future is Fiennes Family Films.

Would he like to act with Ralph? "Well," he says with genuinely startled modesty, "it hadn't crossed my mind."

What parts would he like to play? "Thousands. With as many dimensions as possible," he says with lively seriousness. "One ideal is to juggle the different media. But employment is a wonderful goal, to pay the rent."

On himself: "I know more about the characters I play. That's awful, isn't it? I seem to be able to invest more time in dissecting others' thoughts and motivations than in looking at my own. But maybe, in doing that, I can reveal parts of myself."

Sorry to go on about it, but what is it like being "Ralph Fiennes's brother"? "It's like being all my brothers' and sisters' brother. He's brilliant."

KATE BASSETT

THE SUNDAY TIMES

They have taken my life into little pieces and reworked it with lies and distortions. They have used my movies, added in the violence and death that have visited me, spiced it up with relationships with women, and come up with garbage...

Roman Polanski — with photographs by Helmut Newton — in *The Magazine*, *The Sunday Times* tomorrow

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CONCERT: Bainbridge premiere

Fruitful passion

BBC SO/
Bainbridge
Festival Hall

SIMON BAINBRIDGE'S latest work, *Ad Ora Incerta*, a BBC commission given its world premiere by the BBC Symphony Orchestra under the composer on Wednesday night, is a powerfully conceived, passionately expressed meditation on the inhumanity of man. It transpired a modest-sized Festival Hall audience.

The work consists of a setting for mezzo-soprano of four poems by Primo Levi, written in the years immediately after his Auschwitz experience. The first, *The Crow's Song*, imagines bad news delivered by that doom-laden bird. The orchestral texture, for the most part, is elaborate, with whirling strings and hyperactive woodwind evoking both the avian prophet's 100-mile journey and the anxiety in which it results. Four percussionists are kept busy on an array of instruments and the voice is frequently submerged. There are some ravishing sonorities, though, not least in a climactic passage involving substantial brass.

In the second and third poems, the solo bassoon (eloquently played by Kim Walker) is heard in its highest register, often above the vocal, and in the fourth movement, too, the mezzo spends an inordinate amount of time

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An incredible string band

From hip-hop to
Haydn: Hilary
Finch on the
eclecticism of a
quartet too new
to have a name



Abingdon's RCHK Quartet: "We don't listen to classical music. I suppose we might in about ten years' time..."

Oxford meets Cambridge today — and not just on the river. An Oxfordshire string quartet, each member just 15 years old, travels to Fitzwilliam College to meet 15 other groups for the Cambridge Symposium for Young String Quartets. The weekend of master-classes, discussions and rehearsals is being coached by such veterans as Yifrah Neeman, Martin Lovett, Levon Chilingirian and Philip De Groot.

Some players — those from college junior departments and specialist music schools — will be old hands at it all; others, such as the quartet of Radley College with St Helen and St Katharine, are so young that they have not even got a name. The RCHK Quartet, for want of a better tag, were formed in the New Year: two boys and two girls from their respective schools, five miles apart in Abingdon, which have a ten-year history of choral and orchestral collaboration.

Their coaching session is, by all accounts, the high point of the week. They all seem to love the players' stomps around Oxford in multicoloured Doc Martens, searching out the latest discs from Blur, Massive Attack, Portishead, Nirvana. Would they ever go to a string quartet recital? "No — not likely," says Tamasin Greenough (second violin). "We don't listen to classical music. I suppose we might in about ten years' time..." The best of the grunge bands, after all, "have a tune, play well, and their songs are well structured and varied."

Unlike poor Malcolm Arnold, it was decreed that the RCHK Quartet should tackle the last two movements of his First String Quartet as a complement to the Haydn Op 20 No 3 which they have

also prepared for the symposium. Nobody seems to like it much yet. "It sounds so weird. You can't tell where it's going. At least with Haydn we can see what he's trying to get at. A rehearsal, coached by one of the schools' heads of music

over the accents. Hit the pizzicato so that there's a real bass to the chord." Tom Fairclough (leader), Tamasin Greenough (second violin), Ruth Edwards (viola) and Will Mackie (cello) are a fairly civilised lot and, in addition to the unfamiliarity of the music, there is a natural disinclination, particularly on the part of the girls, to be quite combative enough.

"The audience won't know this piece either, and you've got to sell it to them in one go. You've got nothing to apologise for," says Tillet. More eye contact might help: they do not know each other quite well enough yet to anticipate the quality or speed of response. "Make your eyes dart to wherever that accent is coming from. Tom — lead with your eyebrow. If you like, I once had a violinist friend who 'conducted' with his left ear."

The girls collapse in giggles. But Tamasin, for all her

diffidence, seems to anticipate pretty well. She was Suzuki-trained and feels that the art of listening and the playing by ear involved in her studies have been an enormous help in chamber-music making. But there is still the fear of the unknown — those dark, dank Shostakovich-like passages of the slow movement. "There's no tune — so you have to

create something else. The movement's character is chromatic, isn't it? So really bring the chromatic notes up above the parapet," says Tillet. "Time is nearly up. The sun looks very bright outside. 'Make it finish! It just drifts to the buffers at the moment. And not Not Never play the notes that are left over. Never.'"

WHEN THE BAND STARTS TO PLAY

- Cambridge Symposium for Young String Quartets: Fitzwilliam College until April 3 (permanent office: 01329 283603).
- Gala Concert at the Corn Exchange, Cambridge: Monday, April 3, 7.30pm. Tickets: £6, from 01223 357851.
- The RCHK Quartet is beginning to play its first gigs. For further information, contact Robert Gower, Radley College, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 2HR (01235 543034), or Andrew Tillet, The School of St Helen and St Katharine, Faringdon Road, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 1BE (01235 520173).

WEST END ENTERTAINMENT

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only
Some seats available
Seals at all prices

Aldwych, Aldwych, WC2 0171-416 6000, Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat. Wed and Sat, 3pm.

KILLER JOE: A darkly absorbing shock-drama by Tracy Letts where a

husband brutally murders his wife. Directed by Michael Hoffman. The original Chicago production.

Vaudeville, Strand, WC2 0171-896 9867, Mon-Sat, 8pm.

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THE LIVE BED SHOW: A

ARTS

7

RECORDINGS: A celebration of sleaze at the opera; best value for Beethoven; the Duke, Mingus and Roach in the money; earthy Reef

OPERA

John Higgins

CLASSIC SLEAZE

Various artists
Teldec 4509 99468-2***
THE reasons behind the vogue for the compilation disc are plain. The "new" public for classical music is believed to have only a short attention span, so what better than 20 or so tracks averaging less than four minutes. And there is no need to open up a recording studio: just step down to the archives.

Teldec at least has come up with a good idea with *Sleaze*. The beginning is shaky. The overture to *Don Giovanni* speaks louder of punishment than depravity and, in the Catalogue Aria, László Polgar is not the best Leporello around. Lucia di Lammermoor is another doubtful candidate — all she did was kill an unwanted husband — but Gruberova shines brightly.

It is not until half-way, when Berlin and the 1930s are reached, that the real article emerges. There is early *Lenny*, singing in a high Lolita-like voice with Weill's *Wie man sich bettet*. Equally impressive is early Dietrich turning her attention to two different gentlemen, *Peter and Jonny*. And to prove that Dietrichs do not have a monopoly of sleaze, Curt Bois achieves not looking at the violinist, playing the tango all the time.

But where is the sleaziest operatic family of all, *Salome & Co?* Unaccountably missing. And there may be some puzzlement about the first item, the opening of Britten's *Young Person's Guide*. Corruption or an April Fool's joke? Neither: it was apparently the theme tune of the last Tory party conference.

Hilary Finch

BEETHOVEN

Diabelli Variations
William Kinderman
Hyperion CDA66763***
WILLIAM KINDERMAN is the scholar-performer to whom Alfred Brendel entrusts the programme notes for his own South Bank Beethoven cycle, and he is the author of an important recent Beethoven monograph. His accompanying notes to this disc offer a sure and lucid guide through the extraordinary transformations of his own performance of the *Diabelli Variations*.

This is not the playing one might expect from a scholar. It



Beethoven: wonder-filled

takes an expansive delight in the music's wonder-filled journey from "ironic caricature to sublime transformation". Kinderman's imaginative responses roam free, toughened at their core by the many insights his research has yielded.

Diabelli's waltz theme is in turn exaggerated, reverend, hallucinated and subjected to here, white light. Its steady rhythmic intensification is created with more than a passing breath of Brendel himself, though the calculation of the tenth variation's storm in a teacup and the unfathomable inwardness of No 20 are entirely Kinderman's own.

In this performance, search and surprise become raised to an almost metaphysical level, as the variations become progressively dissociated and finally disincarnate from the theme. Not to be missed.

SCHUBERT
Piano Sonatas D850 & D837
Robert Levin
Sony SK 5336***
ANOTHER exciting American performer-scholar adds his insights to the catalogue this month. Robert Levin has worked more in the field of performing editions, restoring the art of improvisation to Classical embellishment and cadenza, and making several notable reconstructions of Mozart.

His own performances show the mastery of the Classical language at such a deep level that the natural surprises the music springs seem fresh-minted, almost improvisatory themselves. The wide, often surprising palette of the fortepiano (there an 1825 Vien-



Marlene Dietrich on tour in America in 1952 — she still had a suitcase in Berlin

nese Fritz) revitalises the rich colours of Schubert's bold harmonic language.

There is so much to relish here. I particularly enjoyed the cumulative energy built by Levin through the harmonic sequences of the D major Sonata's first movement. They reinforced the strength of its structure before the rhythmic dislocations of the slow movement and one of the most irresistibly seductive Scherzos and Trios in the business.

But where is the sleaziest operatic family of all, *Salome & Co?* Unaccountably missing. And there may be some puzzlement about the first item, the opening of Britten's *Young Person's Guide*. Corruption or an April Fool's joke? Neither: it was apparently the theme tune of the last Tory party conference.

Stephen Pettitt

SCHOENBERG

Gurrelieder
Soloists/Vienna Philharmonic
Orchestra/Abbado
Deutsche Grammophon 439 944-2 (2 CDs)***

CLAUDIO ABBADO's account of Schoenberg's vast song of love, persecution, death, vengeance and transfiguration — a work whose long gestation means that it looks simultaneously backwards to *Pelleas und Melisande* (Schoenberg's not Debussy's) and forwards to *Moses und Aaron* — is a giant, richly indulgent and compellingly cogent one. At once one is struck by the richness of sound produced by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra in its own home, the Vienna Musikverein, and brilliantly captured by the sound engineers. Abbado has also brought to the orchestra a passion worlds removed from the cosy complacency of which it has sometimes been accused.

The soloists are all marvelous, first among them Siegfried Jerusalem, a Waldemar of epic proportions, strong and searing in his upper register, glowingly rich in the lower. Sharon Sweet makes for a radiant Tove, while Marjana Lipovsek strikes the right note of tragedy as the Wood Dove at the end of Part One.

Philip Langridge's naturally strident sound fits well the part of Klaus, the Jesuit Harant Welker's peasant is suitably terror-stricken by the reappearance of the dead warriors. But perhaps the biggest surprise is the presence of Barbara Sukowa as the Speaker in the finale, *The Wild Hunt of the Summer Wind*. Sukowa's stylised delivery lends an appositely surreal air to this transcendent passage and crowns a distinguished reading marked also by the sterling singing of the Vienna State Opera Chorus, the Arnold Schoenberg Choir and the Slovakian Philharmonic Choir of Bratislava.

ORCHESTRAL

Barry Millington

BEETHOVEN

Eroica Symphony; Fidelio Overture
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra/Herbig
Tring TRP026***

THIS new version of Beethoven's *Eroica Symphony*, on the super-budget Tring label, arrived within days of EMI's prestigious full-price release from Wolfgang Sawallisch and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra (reviewed last week). Together they provide proof that these days money no longer guarantees quality.

Guenter Herbig's reading is by no means one of sensational revelations, but it is a powerfully conceived and a very satisfying one. His more standard tempo for the first movement yields a better sense of momentum, where Sawallisch's extra weight tends towards the ponderous. The most remarkable feature of Herbig's performance is the thrilling surge of the horns at the climax of the Funeral March's contrapuntal section. There are further brass sallies in the finale, towards the end of the variations and again, on the horns, in the final bars.

JAZZ

Clive Davis

DUKE ELLINGTON

Money Jungle
Blue Note CDP7463982***

THE master's name takes top billing, yet his meeting with Charles Mingus and Max Roach proved to be one of those occasions when participants operate on an equal footing. Finding common ground without unduly compromising their unyielding contrasting voices. The improvisations crackle and sparkle, touching depths that Ellington's earlier trio showcase *Piano Reflections* — a fine performance on its own terms — never begins to approach.

Originally made for United Artists, *Money Jungle* is one of 25 mid-price reissues chosen to mark the tenth anniversary of the relaunch of Blue Note's ample catalogue. The album dates from a fascinating but often neglected phase of Ellington's career, a period which yielded rewarding collaborations with Louis Armstrong, Coleman Hawkins and John Coltrane. Like Coltrane, Mingus

might have seemed an incongruous partner, but the intensity of his bass playing, rich in drums and dissonant effects, clearly prompted Ellington into responding in kind. Roach is inventive but not hectoring; he nudges the other



Ellington: sparkling

men forward without resorting to the lash. He and Mingus are at their most subtle on *Fleur-de-Africaine*, an exquisite Ellington miniature rarely heard today.

As for the sprinkling of swaggering blues-based tunes, the title of one of the numbers — *Switch Blade* — captures the mood perfectly.

POP ALBUM

David Sinclair

JULIANA HATFIELD

Only Everything
Mammoth/east west 350 005 80***

THE Boston babe-led bands are enjoying a vintage year. With new albums from Belly and Throwing Muses already in the shops, it is now the turn of Juliana Hatfield — formerly of the Blake Babies, Lemonheads and her own Juliana Hatfield Three.

Only Everything is by some distance Hatfield's most confident and downright noisy offering yet. Much heavier than her last album, *Become What You Are*, it combines a swelling, grunge-guitar aesthetic with a sensitive singing style and the sort of pseudo-psychological lyrics favoured by Kristin Hersh.

Despite the echoes of Sonic Youth, Nirvana and the Pixies heard all over *Only Everything*, Hatfield successfully stamps her own distinctive mark on material ranging from the opening full-on rocker, *What A Life*, to the slow, stately finale of *You Blues*.

And if this all sounds as if she is having her cake and eating it, then that is about the size of it. A tasty package it is, too.

POP SINGLE

David Sinclair

REEF

Good Feeling
Sony Soho Square 661360***
INITIALLY lumbered with being that band in the television advertisement for Sony's moribund MiniDisc format, Reef have won serious attention in the hard-rock press for months. *Good Feeling*, their major-label debut, suggests the London four-piece could enjoy success well beyond that specialist market.

Gary Springer's soulful blues-rock voice pitches a lyric about "working things out" and whatever it is that "feels so good to me" above a vigorously syncopated, guitar-led rhythm track. It is a traditional earthy rock sound, but with plenty of youthful brio and a nimble touch.

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GARDENING

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GARDEN ANSWERS



STEPHEN ANDERTON
replies to readers' letters

Q We saw some white flowers, very like large snowdrops, in a garden recently and were told they were snowflakes. Are they easy to grow, and where would we get them? — Mrs P. Collins, Sheffield.

A The spring snowflake, *Leucojum vernalis*, is available from most bulb suppliers. It is as easy to grow as a snowdrop, except that it does not flourish as well in turf. It prefers to be under shrubs, or among other broad-leaved perennials such as hostas or acanthus. It grows to about 9in, and has a larger, more bell-shaped flower than a snowdrop. The foliage is bright green and does not have that glaucous cast of snowdrops. The bulbs will increase readily, and can be split every few years. There is no problem with splitting them now, in the green, in the same way as you would snowdrop bulbs.

The summer snowflake, *Leucojum aestivum*, is larger, and follows on at the end of the daffodil season in April and May. This, too, is easy to grow, and in a heavy, moist soil will make large clumps in rough grass, in the same way as daffodils. Divide old clumps in spring or autumn. The form 'Gravelye Giant' is exceptionally strong, and is reputed to reach a height of 3ft in rich, damp soils, but 2ft is more usual. There is an autumn-flowering snowflake too, *Leucojum autumnale*, but this is far less vigorous and only suitable for an alpine bed or scree garden.

Q I have three 25ft golden Castilleja cypripediums, which I would like to reduce. If I cut them off at half their height, will they sprout and

green over again? Is there any other way of reducing the height without removing the tree? — Peter White, Seaton, County Durham.

A You can cut them off at half height, and they will sprout, mostly from the top ring of side branches rather than the trunk, but you will be storing up problems for later. Cuts across the main trunk of a conifer usually cause it to die back later. The new shoots will need plenty of topping out to make them bush out and cover the hollow centre of the tree. Therefore, it is advisable to cut the main trunks 2-3ft lower than the final desired height.

It is always better with such strong-growing conifers to stop the leader long before it reaches the desired height, when a cut of only half the diameter is needed. The tree will more readily bear many such small cuts than a major wound into old wood. The result looks better too, especially from an upper window.

Remember that close-planted trees will starve each other into slower growth, so taking out a middle one to let more light in will only encourage the others to grow faster. Why not remove the trees, replant, and top them out at the correct height. You will get them back to 12ft in three to four years.

Q Readers wishing to have gardening problems answered should write to: Garden Answers, Weekend, The Times, 1 Pennington St, London E1 9JN. We regret that few personal answers can be given and that it may not be possible to deal with every request. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. The Times regrets that enclosures accompanying letters cannot be returned.



George Plumptre rakes a fine tilth on the small, neglected plot that will be filled with annuals, herbs and vegetables, and feature a stone jardinière

George Plumptre, The Times Gardener, sets about bringing some colourful new life into one of those unsightly 'dead' areas of the garden

Despite the frustrations caused by wet weather in recent months, life is not all bad for the weekend gardener. Three weeks ago, when the first spring day dawned on a Saturday, it was the signal to start work on a project that I have been planning for some weeks: reorganising what I have always loosely referred to as the vegetable garden. The end result will, I hope, be a mixed and decorative planting which draws the area into the rest of the garden.

The 16ft by 10ft plot lies in a corner furthest from the house. Despite its limited size,

it is visible from most parts of our small garden and its often desultory appearance signalled failure. In the past, it has been used for growing some vegetables, and as a patch for experiments by the children with plants and tomatoes in growing bags.

Throughout the summer, the plot is warm and sheltered, catching the sun for much of the day. In winter, the sun is too low to get above adjacent buildings, and the site is constantly damp and cold.

Accepting that I am not going to attempt to grow vegetables throughout the year, I have decided to change the area's identity.

Along the boundary with the lawn edge is a narrow, brick path. Too often, earth from the vegetable garden spilled out over the path and there was no definition to the boundary. This problem has been solved by planting an evergreen hedge of box (*Buxus sempervirens*) parallel to the path. The plants came from my parents' garden and were replanted within 24 hours. The roots are set in a mix of compost and leaf mould, with a sprinkling of bonemeal. I will leave them to settle for a month or so, then give them a clip to keep their shape.

The box hedge announces that this is garden, rather than just a patch of earth in which to grow things occasionally. It also makes a visible feature from the far side of the lawn whereas, in the past, the view petered out against the wooden boundary fence.

This boundary also needed living up, so I am training sweet peas up the cut stems of dogwood (*Cornus alba*). Stuck into the ground, these red-tinted stems make a twiggy screen about 10ft high. The

sweet peas should cover them with flowers for many weeks.

At first, I considered dividing the area with paths to make individual plots more accessible for planting and weeding, but the limited size threatened a fiddly-looking end result. Instead, I have chosen a large ornamental feature, a stone jardinière, positioned centrally in front of the boundary fence, with the sweet peas making the screen on both sides.

The "Elizabethan" jardinière (recommended price £133.50) is 18in high and 26in across its top, and makes a striking impression. It was made by Haddonstone, which offers alternatives, many smaller and cheaper, of similar reconstructed or reconstituted stone. Urns or jardinières, which can be planted up to make a focal point in a scheme such as this, are stocked by many garden centres and nurseries. Prices start at about £40.

The box hedge and the jardinière on its broad base of stone flags will give form and structure to this area of the garden throughout the year.

At the moment, I have worked out the planting for this season only, and will no doubt want to make some changes after mixed success

and failure. After the ground had been dug over it needed thorough treatment with a short-tined rake to break up the clods caused by months of rain and no sun. Incorporating leaf mould has helped and, now that the topsoil is drying, I have a good tilth for planting.

The sweet pea seedlings are in, protected with wood ash from slugs.

I envisage the main area as a meadow of low-growing annuals, herbs and some vegetables. The latter will include attractive individual plants which you pick from, rather than remove the whole plant, such as courgettes and globe artichokes. Salads will include decorative-leaved beetroot and ornamental lettuce.

The annuals will make pools of colour among the predominant greens of the herbs and vegetables. They will include the "poached-egg" plant *Limnanthes douglasii*, and *Phacelia campanulata*. These both flower abundantly from late May until September, with, respectively, bright yellow and white, and deep gentian blue blooms.

Another ingredient will be various herbaceous clematis. These can be grown without support to form loose mounds

from which long shoots will scramble among the other plants. I have planted two types of *Clematis integrifolia* 'Hendersonii', with blue nodding bell-like flowers, and a striking new pink-flowered form, 'Pangbourne Pink'. *C. heraclefolia* 'Wyevale' has pale-blue scented flowers, and my other clematis, *recta* 'Purpurea', has white flowers offset by purple foliage.

Herbaceous clematis are invaluable but little-known compared to their climbing relatives. Vigorous growers, they do not flower until June (continuing into September), but will rapidly increase from their present small clumps of new shoots to show quantities of bold, fresh foliage.

The main work on the plot has now been done, but there will be additions during the next few weeks. Because the sun has yet to warm the earth I have delayed sowing the seeds of the annuals. I will do this during the next fortnight, making a succession of sowings to extend the flowering period.

Restoring what has always been a somewhat "dead" area of the garden has been rewarding. In a large garden, such areas can be forgotten about, but in one of the size of mine they are always visible, demanding improvement.

Q For information about Haddonstone products, a catalogue, and your nearest stockist, telephone 01604 770711.

WEEKEND TIPS

● Emerging perennials, such as peonies, will benefit from a sprinkling of Gromore, or a similar general fertiliser.

● Except in the coldest parts of the country, begin sowing the seeds of hardy annuals into their growing position. (Giving the soil time to warm up improves germination.) For prolonged flowering, sow the seeds in batches over, say, a fortnight.

● Dead-head the seedpods of daffodils to give stronger bulbs and better flowering next year.

● Combat whitefly in the greenhouse early by hanging up some sticky cards.

● Begin sowing radish seed into well-fertilised ground. Thin out the seedlings later, so that growth goes into the roots, rather than the foliage.

● Plant early potato varieties, having first top-dressed the ground with a general fertiliser. Plant main crop varieties in a fortnight or so. The sprouted tubers should be planted about 4-6in deep.



Start sowing radish seed

from which long shoots will scramble among the other plants. I have planted two types of *Clematis integrifolia* 'Hendersonii', with blue nodding bell-like flowers, and a striking new pink-flowered form, 'Pangbourne Pink'. *C. heraclefolia* 'Wyevale' has pale-blue scented flowers, and my other clematis, *recta* 'Purpurea', has white flowers offset by purple foliage.

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Gardens to visit

□ Speke Hall, The Walk, Speke, Liverpool (0151 421 7231).

Seven miles southeast of city centre, off A561. Open daily and on Bank Holidays (except Mondays and Good Friday), 11.30am from April 1 to end October. £1.

Speke is one of England's most stunning Elizabethan black-and-white timbered houses. It suffers from being in one of the least enviable positions of any National Trust property, hemmed between the Merseyside conurbation and Liverpool airport. Given this setting, the formal gardens around the house and its courtyard, and the larger woodland gardens towards the perimeter, shield the house to a remarkable degree. Two old yew trees in the courtyard would appear to be as venerable as the house. In spring, the main attraction is the woodland and water garden, which the Trust has recently created. There are lots of daffodils along the paths, and camellias are a feature in the woodland garden and along the stream.

□ Arbuthnot Castle, Laurencekirk, Grampian (01561 361224).

On B967, eight miles from Laurencekirk and three miles from Inverurie. Open daily all year, 9am-5pm. £1.50, children £1.

The east coast of Scotland seems an unlikely place for garden visiting in spring. But Arbuthnot's garden benefits from being only a few miles from the sea. The series of steep, grass terraces in front of the castle date from the 17th century. At the bottom of the slope, the Bervie Water Valley provides the garden's setting. The terraces have long, diagonal grass paths, with views from one end to another. In spring, visitors are greeted by primroses and celandines covering the grass on either side of the drive, with banks of rhododendrons behind.

□ Glendurgan (01326 250906) and Trebah (01326 250448), Mawman Smith, near Falmouth, Cornwall.

Both four miles southwest of Falmouth and signed from A39. Glendurgan is open Mar-Oct, Tues-Sat and Bank Holidays. 10.30am-5.30pm (last admission 4.30pm). Closed April 14, £2.50. Trebah is open daily all year, 10.30am-5pm. £2.50.

Although these two gardens have different owners they are so close (about half a mile) that the garden visitor can have a memorable day visiting both. They were created by members of the Fox family. Glendurgan during the 1830s



Bampton Manor in Oxfordshire is renowned for its herbaceous borders

and Trebah during the 1840s, and they occupy similar spectacular natural sites. From both houses, ravines drop away to the Helford river in the distance. The steep valley sides and the lower areas in the middle are planted with a trees, shrubs and spring bulbs, many rare and tender. The New Zealand tree fern *Dicksonia antarctica* is a feature in both gardens. These are two gardens where the introduction of outstanding plants to a dramatic natural landscape has continued to an unusually high standard. Glendurgan is in run by the National Trust, while Major and Mrs Tony Hibbert, who took on Trebah in 1981 in a state of neglect, have established the Trebah Garden Trust.

□ Bampton Manor (01993 850231) and Weald Manor (01993 850224), Bampton, Oxfordshire.

Open tomorrow, 2-5.30pm. £1.50, children free. These two gardens are roughly half a mile apart at opposite ends of Bampton village. Bampton Manor has long been admired, as it belonged to the present owners' predecessor, Peggy Munster, whose renowned double herbaceous borders are still a feature. Now there is a strong emphasis on spring planting throughout the garden's different areas and enclosures. One area under mature trees is kept as a wild garden, with daffodils, snake's head fritillaries

and other bulbs growing in the grass. Quantities of midsummer bulbs, including daffodils and tulips, are a delightful feature, while from all parts of the garden the village church spire provides the backdrop to views. A smaller garden surrounds Weald Manor. Yew topiary and shrub borders lead to an area of woodland garden with a small lake on one side. Daffodils and anemones are among the spring-flowering plants beneath an interesting collection of trees, such as an American buckeye.

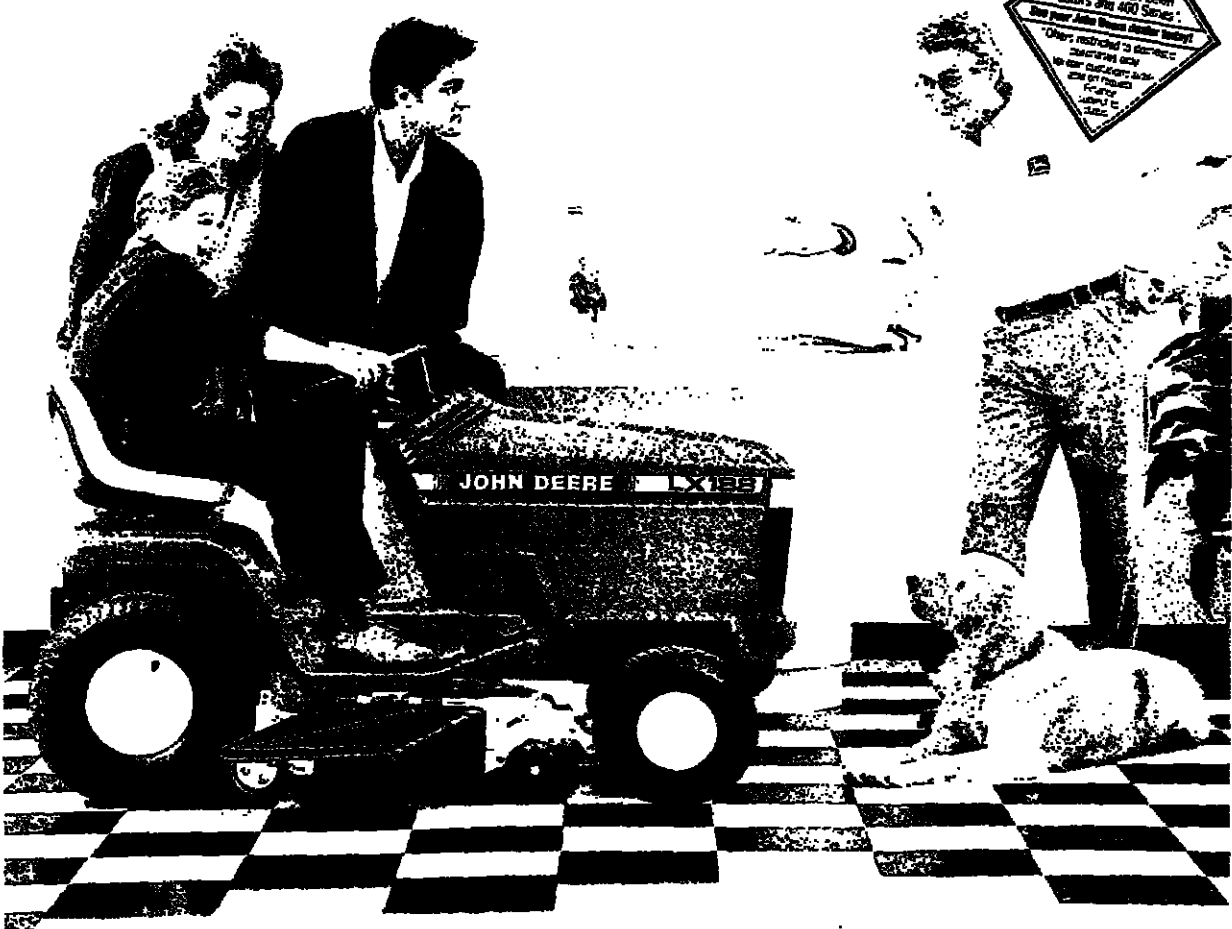
□ Great Thurlow Hall, Haverhill, Suffolk.

In Great Thurlow village, on B1061. Open tomorrow, 2-5pm. £1.50, children free.

The annual spring garden opening at Great Thurlow allows visitors to enjoy the riverside walks and sweeping carpets of daffodils. Immediate terraces, borders and lawns surround the Georgian house, the grass rising down in a gentle slope to the River Stour, which flows through the garden. About 20 acres in all, including the walled kitchen garden, Great Thurlow is the ideal place for a spring walk. Willows are dotted along the banks of the Stour, but the quantities of daffodils along the banks and around the lake, through which the river flows, is the feature that most people remember.

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PROPERTY

13

Farms under 50 acres are in great demand from market gardeners and livestock specialists

Smallholding, big opportunity

Originally perceived as a stepping-stone to farming, smallholdings are becoming increasingly sought-after and are now in short supply. These days, however, buyers tend not to be farmers, but market gardeners, equestrian or pedigree livestock enthusiasts, and those seeking "the good life", albeit sustained by a second income.

A smallholding can be a plant nursery, market garden, "pick your own" fruit farm, or vineyard, usually between three and 20 acres, and up to 50 acres for farms rearing sheep or specialist livestock. A dairy farm of 100 acres can support two adults successfully, but the same cannot be said of an arable unit of a similar size. Away from mainstream farming, a horticultural enterprise (a nursery or market garden) can survive on as little as three acres because of the intensive nature of the operation.

In the southwest, smallholdings, particularly those with equestrian facilities, are going from strength to strength, according to Richard Anstis of West Country estate agent, Palmer Snell. "The greatest demand has been for plots up to five acres, particularly those with pony paddocks," he says.

Demand is reported to be in excess of supply in Somerset, Dorset and Devon, with specific shortfalls in smallholdings between 20 and 50 acres. These are primarily used for specialist livestock farming, such as Jacob's sheep or Old Spot pigs. "The price for agricultural land has gone up by £400 per acre in the past six months, and when you get down to three acres, up to £4,000 an acre is not unusual," says Mr Anstis.

The price of agricultural property in general in the region is forecast to continue to rise.

A smallholding at Winkleigh in Devon, with about 19 acres of organic pasture, woodlands, orchards, meadows and marshland, is on offer for £160,000, through agent Palmer Snell (01935 812218). The price includes a 17th-century four-bedroom thatched house, a courtyard, traditional out-buildings and a stable. For the past 14 years, the owners have organically farmed the land and encouraged the enrichment of flora and fauna.



The farm-shop at Blacksmith's Meadow near Stowmarket (above and below), on sale for £250,000

on this attractive smallholding about nine miles from Okehampton, on the edge of Dartmoor National Park.

In East Anglia, smallholdings are in constant demand, according to estate agent Savills. The market is specialised and buyers are generally market gardeners and horticulturalists. The Ipswich office of Savills (01473 226191) is asking £250,000 for Blacksmith's Meadows, a smallholding with an established farm-shop and business near Stowmarket in Suffolk. The price includes a modern three-bedroom house, out-buildings and seven acres under horticultural production, including strawberries, winter vegetables and chrysanthemums.

An attractive family house in ten



The three-bedroom house set in seven acres

acres of landscaped gardens and grounds, with an adjoining established specialist nursery, near Dereham in Norfolk, is on offer for £185,000 through agent Strutt & Parker in Norwich (01603 617431). Lavender House comes with four bedrooms and four reception

rooms; there is also a range of out-buildings used for the nursery business, specialising in rare plants, shrubs and trees.

In the Yorkshire Dales, there are a number of small farms for sale, usually with a stone-built farmhouse, out-buildings and up to 50 acres of pastureland.

One of the prettiest smallholdings for sale in North Yorkshire is Throstle Gill, a small Dales farm in 33 acres of pasture and meadowland, once used for grazing sheep, near the village of Dalton. Strutt & Parker in Harrogate (01423 561274) is asking £325,000 for the property, which includes a modernised five-bedroom stone farmhouse, a two-bedroom cottage, stabling and farm buildings.

CASE HISTORY

Graham Smith and Marlene Scott bought their smallholding in south Wales to expand a thriving nursery business. "We started in our cottage garden, but soon ran out of land and had to find something bigger," says Mr Smith. They found it in the hills above Carmarthen: ten acres of mixed woodlands and farmland, with its own stream, a ramshackle farmhouse and barns.

"We bought the property jointly with Marlene's daughter, Anne Marie, and her partner, Sean, who are professional artists. They wanted outbuildings to start a craft centre, and we needed land for our nursery."

They bought the property in April 1994 for £92,000. Overgrown woods have been cut back to make a waterside nature reserve, grazing land has been terraced for planting, and a stone barn converted into a sales office. Mr Smith estimates the project has cost him £20,000 on top of the purchase price. The nursery will open on May 5, concentrating on rare alpines, herbs, bulbs and cottage garden plants.

● Old Barn Nursery, Llynegby, non-drain, Carmarthen. Dyfed (01267 237275).

Prices slip further west in Wales, where a farmhouse with grazing land can be bought for as little as £50,000. Penrhel Farm, at Llanynys, near the Welsh border market town of Builth Wells, comprises a three-bedroom stone farmhouse, a range of out-buildings, five loose boxes and three acres of paddocks and orchards. The asking price is £79,950 and the agent is GA Property Services in Hereford (01432 276266).

If a vineyard is more to your taste, John D Wood in Lymington (01590 677233) is asking £390,000 for Lymington Vineyard at the southern edge of the New Forest, close to the Solent, which includes six acres of established vines. It comes with a five-bedroom period cottage, winery, shop and 31 acres of orchard, paddocks and woodland on the edge of the Avon.

CHERYL TAYLOR



Kent: Chantry Cottage, The Square, Chilham, near Canterbury. Grade II listed cottage with small rear patio garden, in a village renowned for its period properties. Two bedrooms (one with dressing area/washroom), bathroom, lounge, dining room, kitchen, cellar/study. About £115,000 (GA Property Services, 01227 454925).

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Devon: 1 Pikes Cottages, Colaton Raleigh. Grade II listed cottage with lawned front garden, rear cobbled courtyard and views over the surrounding countryside. Three bedrooms, bathroom, two reception rooms, study, modernised kitchen, utility room and cloakroom. About £99,950 (Fulford's, 01395 443758).



Suffolk: Lark Rise, Depden Green, near Bury St Edmunds. Detached Victorian house in lawned gardens, with views over village green and farmland. Three bedrooms, bathroom, sitting room, dining hall, kitchen/breakfast room, utility room, garage. About £105,000 (Bedfords, 01284 769999).

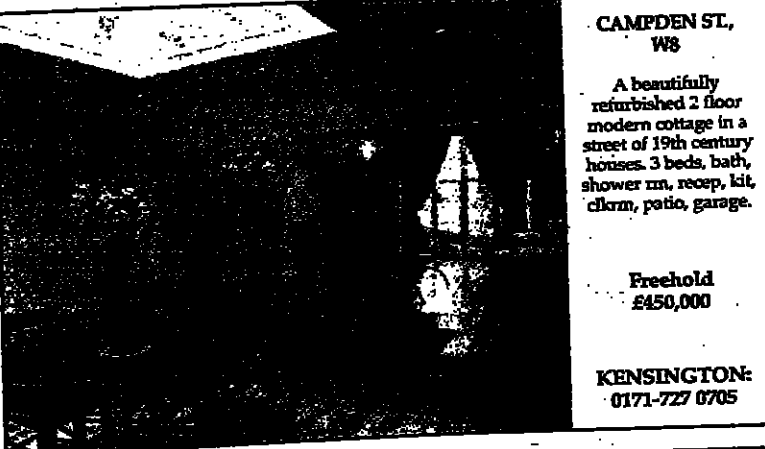
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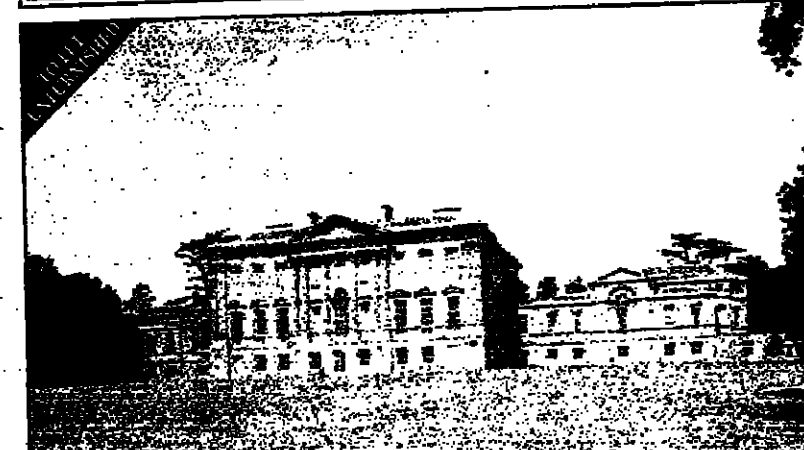
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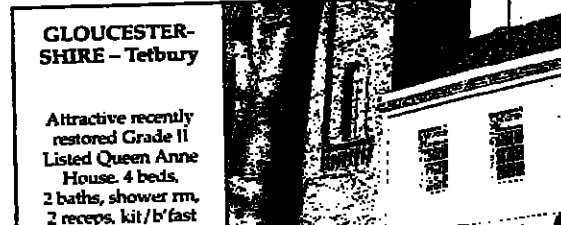
Freehold

Price Guide:

£575,000

LYMINGTON:

01590 677233



GLoucester-shire - Tetbury
Attractive recently restored Grade II Listed Queen Anne House. 4 beds, 2 baths, shower rm, 2 recep, kit/b'fast rm, ckm, cellar, garden. Freehold

Price Guide:

£230,000

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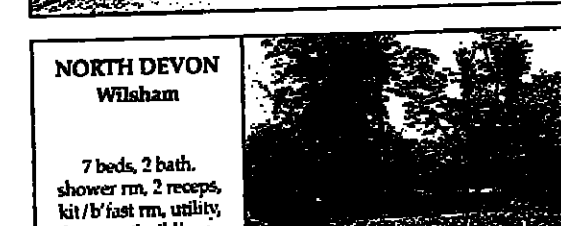
Charming extended period cottage with spacious accommodation and pretty landscaped garden. 4 beds, 2 baths, 3 recep, kit/utility, ckm/shower rm, hall, garage, playrm/studio. Freehold

Price Guide:

£225,000

FARNHAM:

01252 737115



NORTH DEVON
Willingham
7 beds, 2 bath, shower rm, 2 recep, kit/b'fast rm, utility, barn, outbuildings, garden, JSA Gribble Booth & Taylor. 01643 702281.

Price Guide:

£155,000

WINCHESTER:
01962 863131

The Duchess of Windsor's last years were spent under the dark control of her unstable lawyer, says Anthony Holden

A very murky Windsor soup

IN 1980, *The Sunday Times* commissioned Lord Snowdon to photograph the ailing, octogenarian Duchess of Windsor. The Karsh of Ottawa portrait on this book's jacket is poignant evidence that Snowdon never managed it. Access to the Duchess was firmly blocked by her notoriously protective lawyer, Suzanne Blum.

The writer assigned to the project, Caroline Blackwood, understandably became as fascinated by Blum as by the Duchess. Who was this formidable old crone, as elderly as her charge, who appeared to have taken control of the Duchess's life — to the point of controlling her letters and selling off her belongings — only after the Duke of Windsor's death and his widow's relapse into half-dead senility?

How had Blum so comprehensively cornered the Windsor market, and what was really going on behind those padlocked doors in the Bois de Boulogne? Was the Duch-

ess, as rumour had it, a comatose, shrivelled old prune, artificially kept alive by Blum for her own dark reasons — a curious mix of snobbery and commerce?

When Blackwood tried to flatter her way past Cerberus to the Duchess — by writing a profile of Blum instead and getting Snowdon to take her portrait — she was entering deeper waters. The aggressively litigious Blum, protective of the Duchess to the point of obsession, was duly flattered by the attentions of Snowdon, then British royalty's next most famous divorcee. But she was also a wily old bird, whose legal expertise would stop at nothing to defend her own name as much as her client's.

Amid bizarre details of their dealings, Blackwood paints a por-

trait so vividly damning that publication had to await Blum's death last year, at the age of 95, eight years after her Duchess.

The *maitre* emerges as a cunning, mendacious, unstable obsessive, prepared to rewrite recent history to establish herself as the (wholly unqualified) keeper of the Windsor flame — watchdog to a lost dynasty that could do no wrong, unlike those it left behind on the British throne. Her role as a forensic Miss Havisham, married to a dying general, and living in a cobwebbed claustrophobia of sepia rooms and drawn curtains, is half-way to the twilight zone inhabited by her

beloved employer, hidden so carefully from an inquisitive world that Blackwood even wonders if she might already be dead. By the book's climax, the author finally manages to get as far as the front door — no mean feat — only to find her way barred by yet another Addams Family grotesque, the bisexual butler Georges, whose subsequent death is also recorded in her tantalisingly inconclusive epilogue.

The one survivor who does not emerge at all well, and now needs to look to his reputation, is the biographer Michael Bloch, a devoted Blum protégé apparently paid in Windsor letters.

In the process, Blum's Windsor worship seems to have proved infectious; Blackwood's own acute case of red-carpet fever has her

describing the sometime Mrs Simpson as "a figure who had changed historical events more drastically than any other woman in human history". But for all her naïveté, at times illiterate prose style, she evokes a dark, mysterious twilight to the Windsor story which future historians will ignore at their peril.

Despite her choice of title, Blackwood's real subject is the *maitre*, not the Duchess. The result is a bizarre Faristan re-creation, 50 years on, of Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas. Before page one, Blum is a "necrophiliac" liar; by the end she is The Creature from the Windsor Lagoon. Somewhere in between lies a riveting story shamelessly told. Is it the truth? That, as Blackwood herself concedes, "only time will elucidate".



The Duchess of Windsor in Paris in thrall to Maitre Blum

Lot of soul but no heart

■ HIGH FIDELITY
By Nick Hornby
Collins, £14.99

NICK HORNBY'S first book, *Fever Pitch*, was superb — the best thing to happen to English football since Eric Cantona came across the Channel. Fans of that book will approach this, his first novel, with enormous goodwill and anticipation. But many will be a bit disappointed — and not just because of the heroically self-denying refusal to include any football references.

To judge by the testimonials from Julie Burchill and the dreadful sideburns revealed in his picture, Hornby might have been keeping bad company. Certainly, much of this book reads like the worst sort of fashion-conscious journalism. Some of it — one passage describing the sexual etiquette of a one-night stand, for instance — is a lot like one of those throwaway, the-thing-about-women columns in monthly magazines. You appreciate one or two of the insights as familiar and smile, but do not laugh, at the ritual humour, but you are left with a feeling of having been only mildly entertained, because no real emotion has been laid bare. Hornby tries, but the dark stuff he brings in about deception and death comes out of nowhere and does not convince.

The story is full of almost-hot contemporary references (*Reservoir Dogs* figures strongly), and there are some cute observations about men and women, London life, suburban life, coming-to-London-from-the-suburbs life, and much more. In parts it is genuinely funny, and it also provides an excellent, tasteful, well-nigh comprehensive guide to soul music. Hornby's other obsession.

It is not a bad book, but its talented author still seems to be suffering from the same lack of confidence he revealed in *Fever Pitch* and which he injects into his main character here. Next time out, he should show what he really can do.

ROBERT CRAMPTON



Star-crossed lovers: Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor at their first wedding in 1964

IN his television and film work, both as an actor and as a writer, Michael Palin has often seemed drawn to worms that turn. Martin Sproule, the hero of Palin's first novel, is another of these mild-mannered obsessives, a weedy conformist whose meekly anoraked exterior turns out to mask a core of heroic madness.

Thirty-six years old, still living at home with his mother, Martin is assistant manager at the post office in Theston, a town near the Suffolk coast. Palin's Suffolk is no pink, thatched weekend idyll: this is full-time countryside, all bungalows and bigotry, a vast windswept suburbia where the buses no longer run.

Martin is a public figure, a servant of the community; the post office stands at the heart of Theston life. But the private world of Martin's imagination is far from East Anglia's melancholy coast. A photograph of Ernest Hemingway dominates Martin's bedroom. Under its unflinching gaze,

The potency of being Ernest

■ HEMINGWAY'S CHAIR
By Michael Palin
Methuen, £14.99

and helped on his way by a medicine chest of his hero's favourite tipples, the assistant post-office manager can fly to Havana or Harry's Bar.

Public and private worlds come together with a crash. Mr Padgett the postmaster retires, replaced by a thrusting young champion of the enterprising culture. Martin, who had expected to take charge himself, sees the institution he loves dismantled and plundered by a corrupt new regime more interested in commodities than communities. While Theston acquiesces out of fear, self-interest or greed, Martin takes a stand. With the encouragement of Ruth, a visit-

ing American academic at work on a study of Hemingway's women, he vaults the mental barrier between his hero and himself. As magnificent disaster approaches, the beguiling comedy of small-town manners darkens faster than a Suffolk sky.

IAN BRUNSKILL



Palin: drawn to worms

Listen to the band

■ THE ORCHESTRA
By Danny Danziger
HarperCollins, £16.99

DESPITE its tortuous pre-publication progress — with newspapers drooling over the "juicy bits", then the forced withdrawal of three paragraphs assassinating Soliti's character — this collection of interviews with 50 London Philharmonic players is a reasonable account of what goes on inside the minds of musicians. Which? Money worries, job insecurities, resentment of authority, lustful thoughts about colleagues, jealousy of success — in fact, the same dreary thoughts as occur to toilers everywhere.

Danziger simply switches on the tape-recorder and lets his subjects ramble on until they condemn themselves out of their own mouths. But he should have added a few footnotes to give some context to the more gnomic utter-

ances. After all, this orchestra's recent managerial history makes the last days of Caligula look like an exercise in benign paternalism. You learn nothing of that here, though you can sense that something has happened to make the players so cynical.

But the main gripe is misspelt names: truly surreal. You find, for example, "Cheetham's School", "Pulchmella", the "Musickweren", "Cervallisch" and "George Soliti" (no wonder he is cross). I do not know whether Harpalkofinz publishes a music dictionary, but someone there should go out and buy one.

RICHARD MORRISON

The Times/Dillons Bestsellers

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4	A RUTHLESS NEED Catherine Cookson (Bantam)	£5.99	6	3	
5	WRITING HOME Alan Bennett (Faber)	£17.50	8	20	
6	THE BLACK ALBUM Hamid Karzai (Faber)	£14.99	0	1	
7	FLAVOURS OF INDIA Madhur Jaffrey (BBC)	£12.99	2	2	
8	LONG WALK TO FREEDOM Nelson Mandela (Little Brown)	£20.00	0	10	
9	THE CRUSADES Terry Jones (BBC)	£17.99	0	6	
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2	FIST OF GOD Frederick Forsyth (Corgi)	£4.99	1	7	
3	PLAYING FOR THE ASHES Elizabeth George (Bantam)	£4.99	4	4	
4	THE HIPPOPOTAMUS Stephen Fry (Arrow)	£5.99	5	2	
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8	AN IMAGINATIVE EXPERIENCE Mary Wesley (Black Swan)	£5.99	9	10	
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Derwent May reviews the critics

Pleasure ratings are awarded to a maximum of five. Column centimetres indicate the length of reviews to date in national broadsheet papers

Amis and enemies: After all the hype and the money, Martin Amis cannot have expected good reviews for his novel, *The Information* (Flamingo, £15.99). But he did not do too badly. It is a story of deadly rivalry between two

novelists, one a dismal failure, the other a shallow success. "Amis is funny about both writers... good," said Victoria Glendinning in *The Daily Telegraph*, and in *The Times* Malcolm Bradbury wrote: "It sparkles with Amis's distinctive rage, disgust, stylistic observation, language." In *The Independent* on Sunday Allison Pearson concluded: "The writing is on fire." But in the *TLS* Adam Mars-Jones said: "It's as if he was writing a novel about a mid-life crisis, and then had a mid-life crisis", while in *The Observer* Michael Ratcliffe noted "near-hysterical envy is its generating passion" — and you would need "an appetite for male menopause-frenzy" to read all its 500 pages. "Brilliant caricature," conceded Alain de Botton in *The Sunday Telegraph* — but in *The Guardian* David Sexton called it "as subtle and realistic as a Tom & Jerry cartoon". Col cms: 522

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NEW IN PAPERBACK

■ THE HOUSE OF SPLENDID ISOLATION
By Edna O'Brien
Phoenix, £5.99

Josie draws out her lonely, widowed middle-age in a large and decrepit house in a remote corner of Ireland. She feeds off memories and the parcels of bread and bacon left for her on the windowsill. Into this frozen, frightened existence comes a Republican terrorist on the run, a young man with "golden eyes". He stays, of course, and his presence liberates Josie even as it embroils her, unwittingly, in the murky world of terrorism. On memory, nature, love, betrayal, O'Brien's prose is as resonant and lyrical as always, but she seems ill at ease with the themes of political conflict and this fragmentary novel fails to live up to the rich promise of all its parts.

■ OPEN SECRETS
By Alice Munro
Vintage, £5.99

These elegant stories are set in periods from the mid 19th-century to the present. They take place mostly in small-town Canada but hint at wider perspectives when characters are lifted, often quite unexpectedly, out of their usual rut. Their protagonists are mostly women — awkward and determined — who do not fit in with society's expectations. One pursues her husband to Australia where he has eloped with a younger woman. Another walks away from her home in the outback, leaving her past behind her. These stories are unsettling, but wonderfully funny too.

A L.A. HORROR

■ THE FOLDING STAR
By Alan Hollinghurst
Vintage, £5.99

The second novel by the highly-praised author of *The Swimming-Pool Library*, this story of an Englishman's obsession with his Belgian pupil was shortlisted for the 1994 Booker Prize. A desperate passion is followed, through all the extremes of tenderness and lust — from dreams and tentative gestures to voyeurism and the use of fetish — without evasion and in extraordinarily discriminating prose. Perhaps for this reason, it is not Luc, the adored, who holds the reader's attention so much as Edward the helplessly, even comically, enchanted.

■ THE SPIRIT OF CRICKET
Edited by Christopher Martin-Jenkins
Faber, £7.99

The editor's name gives authority to this "personal anthology". While there is no shortage of cricket compilations this is certainly the best of the recent crop. It not only has great cricketers who can write — Don Bradman, Mike Brearley, Richie Benaud — but also famous writers who know about cricket. The humour of Stephen Fry and John Cleese punctuates the more serious reflections of Neville Cardus and Scyld Berry. This is cricket — from legends of the first match at Hambledon to autumn shadows on the pitch after the season's last game.

Contributors: Lucy Lethbridge, Hazel Leslie, Alison Burns, Giles Coren.

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Cracking visit

Ploughing with the big boys

NEY. heavy land, certainly not boy's land, and he was not making a man's job of it. Suddenly, a gentleman in a Rolls-Royce drew up alongside the field. The boy did not know the man and was surprised when the chap got out of the car and ordered him, "Get off that tractor now and

But I had no limousine drawing up alongside my field. I only had the feel of the land beneath my boot leather, and an eye which noticed how the lumps of ploughed land crumbled into a fine tilth as I kicked them. It is usually a mistake to do this, but I consulted local opinion. There was a sharp


So, in the end, I decided to try it and spent a morning with a pair of horses drawing spiked harrows across the field, enjoying the sight of sinister clouds being reduced to dust by the timeliness of my operation. With every yard that we plodded, I felt more and more of a man.

Now the field is sown with spring oats and vetches which will grow together into a luscious mixture which we shall cut and make into hay. I did it! For almost the first time in the history of this column, I got something right. Please believe me, even though it is All Fool's Day, I really did it.

Welcome to an alternative Utopia

In addition to running dental courses for adults, children in a variety of subjects — from bird-watching to blacksmithing — are the center of spreading its green gospel. A number of overseas local projects similar to the W

tor to th



Report

and which mainly inhabits the spruce forests of Scandinavia and northern Russia, will start nesting in August, and bring up broods of young all the way through winter, because that is when the seeds of the spruce firs are ripe. Food is more important than temperature to them.

There is also a crossbill native to Britain, the Scottish crossbill, which scarcely stirs from its haunts in what is left of the ancient Caledonian Pine Forest. It has a slightly larger beak than the common crossbill, and is generally regarded as a separate species. Pine seeds ripen later than spruce, so the Scottish birds do not nest in August—but they will start nesting in the snowy woods in January if the seeds are coming along well.

After a good year for

DERWENT MAY

- **What's about:** Birders — listen for the green woodpecker's distinctive "jaffling" call. Twitchers — watch for pine bunting at Gibraltar Point, Lincolnshire; little bunting at Colchester, Essex; and Richard's pipit at Burnham Overy, Norfolk.
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TRAVEL

ITALY: Julia Llewellyn Smith takes a cookery course — and the chef takes flak

Recipe for kitchen rebellion

PHILIP LITTLEHALES

I was the fifth and final day of a week's cooking in the Umbrian hills and Steve, the sous chef, was teaching us how to make that Italian favourite *ravioli di zucca*, or pumpkin ravioli. The keener members of the class chopped up a pumpkin, while the rest of us gossiped at the back. The slices baked in the oven, while the swots rolled out translucent layers of pasta and the rest of us sneaked off to the bar. The baked pumpkin was scooped into a food processor and mangled up, at which point Steve announced he was going to add almond biscuit crumbs.

The class shuddered. "You can't do that," we cried. "It will be disgusting." Steve assured us he could, and it would taste divine. It was an ancient Italian recipe. He urged us to taste the mix: it was as cloying as a Whitney Houston ballad, and we mutinously told him so. He threw in some more parmesan and asked us to try again. It was still revolting, but we didn't dare rebel twice.

When the little parcels were served up at dinner, we buried them in more parmesan and gulped them down whole, but nothing could make them taste good. Steve looked as if he had booked the last passage on the *Titanic*.

Poor Steve: it was the only really nasty dish we were served in a whole week of delicious food and bountiful wine. Apart, that is, from the aubergines.

"Aubergines," said Alastair Little, of the eponymous restaurant in London and our teacher for the week, "do not need to be cooked in oil. Oh, no. They soak up too much." Little's method was to stick the aubergines straight on to a hot plate and let them sizzle *au naturel*. They tasted like mouldy tree bark. By the fourth day I would have rather fallen on my serrated knife than eat another eggplant. In fact, I haven't touched one (jotted or otherwise) to this day.

Everything else we ate was spectacular. Little, the man responsible for bringing much of the new Italian cooking to London, is an excellent teacher, managing to entertain a class whose abilities ranged from complete beginner to professional. He knows that the secret of charm is honesty, and delighted us all by admitting to using packet stock (watered down in double the recommended quantities) and tinned peaches, and reciting other scurrilous anecdotes about the restaurant trade.

Under his tuition we learned how to make the definitive chocolate tart (an almost religious totem), the ultimate mushroom risotto and the perfect *panzanella* to salad made, unapologetically, of breadcrumbs, which tastes like a midsummer's day. We learned how to out-Sainsbury Sainsbury's by sun-drying our own tomatoes, baking our



Rocco, the pizza-maker, sets to work with the ham and the dreaded aubergines

own focaccia and, on one evening, importing Rocco the local pizza-maker to show us how to bake our own.

We were staying in the most idyllic setting imaginable, on the estate of La Cacciata, the working farm of the Belcapo family, noted for its extra virgin oil, which sits on a hill overlooking the medieval

town of Orvieto and its technicolour cathedral.

Lessons were in the vast, fly-spattered farmhouse kitchen: dinner on the terrace and (the basic) bedrooms in a series of surrounding farmhouses reached after a muddy stumble across the fields.

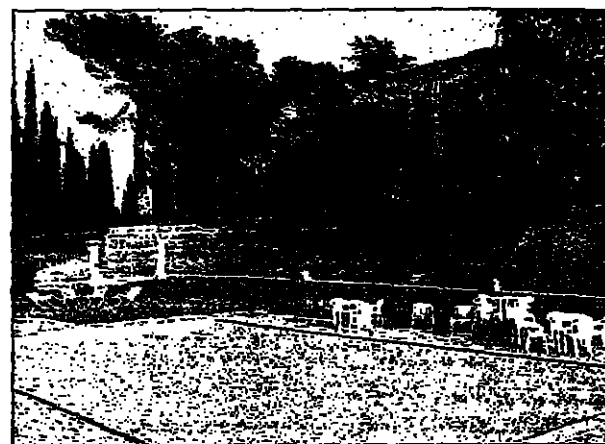
It was usually a hazy stumble, too. All wine, from the

Belcapo estate, was included, which, given a convivial group, could mean the week worked out at extremely good value. As it did also when you considered what it would cost to eat for a week in Little's restaurant.

Everyone at La Cacciata emphasises that you are on holiday. "We have breakfast at



Intense concentration as the cookery class starts work



The swimming pool and gardens at La Cacciata estate.

nine, then we cook, then we have a drink, then we will eat lunch and then we will break and then we will eat dinner." Little said on the first evening, as we sat nibbling *crostini* under an ochre sky.

None of the classes were compulsory, nobody was singled out to peel charred peppers in front of their classmates and no one was mocked for a badly chopped carrot. Anyone who thought that life was too short to stuff a mushroom (or in my case to bake bread) could shove off, no questions asked. And no paying guests had to clear tables or wash up.

Afternoons were free to swim in the pool, with its fantastic view over the hills, and take riding lessons from a laid-back instructor. All was well when the sun shone, less so on rainy days when there was little to do but lie on one's lumpy mattress and wait until it was a decent hour to go to the bar.

Enjoying the week was just as dependent on our group of 16 as on learning that you didn't need to put salt in the broccoli water. Friends had teased me before I went that I would be marooned among rich housewives and yuppie couples longing to make their own *polenta*. Both types were present along with a strong contingent of single men and several others who escaped definition. Many had encoun-

tered each other on previous courses. By the end of the second day we were getting on famously, by the end of the week we were heartened at the news of a class romance.

We all swore we'd keep in touch and that we'd throw huge dinner parties on our return. I don't know about the others, but I have done neither. You are given a comprehensive print-out of all recipes covered but, after a week's cooking, I wanted to eat out for the rest of my life, and it was Christmas before I impressed myself by chopping an onion in true *cordon-bleu* style, and only now can I contemplate trying out *Maiale al Latte* (pork baked in milk and utterly divine) in my very un-Umbrian kitchen.

An absolute beginner would learn a lot on this course, an expert would have tremendous fun. But beware of the aubergines and don't touch the pumpkin ravioli.

● The author was a guest of La Cacciata. One week's full board at La Cacciata costs £800, excluding flights. Courses run from Saturday to Saturday from mid-May to the end of July and start again in September, continuing to mid-October. From May 13 to June 3, the guest chef will be Sophie Bainbridge; from June 3-24, Anthony Warrall-Thompson. Alastair Little will be the main chef from June 23 onwards. For booking forms, contact Sarah Robson, 15 Dawson Place, London W2 4TH (0171-243 8042).

HOLIDAYS FOR COOKS WITH A TASTE FOR LEARNING

□ France is the leading country for cookery-course holidays, many of them based on the older, Calvados, cream and cheeses of Normandy.

□ Intravel (01653 628811) offers three-night breaks, staying in aubergines and, on two afternoons, trying your hand at some Norman delights under the supervision of the chef. For example, at the 300-year-old Auberge du Val au Cestre, 37 miles from Dieppe, guests learn the secrets of *rillettes de saumon* and *hare sauté*. The self-drive, three-night break costs £299, including B&B and the cross-Channel fares. Or, you can go behind the scenes on a

weekend at the Hotel de France et des Fuschias in the fishing port of St Vaast, 19 miles from Cherbourg, for more Norman recipes, Calvados-tasting sessions and visits to oyster farms. This costs £207.

□ Brigitte Tilleray, a Normandy-born cook and author of *The Frenchwoman's Kitchen*, runs cookery breaks with La France des Villages (01449 757678). These include a minimum of nine hours' cookery demonstrations by an English-speaking chef, with guests trying out their own skills. Three excursions, all meals and wines, four nights' stay in a 17th-century farmhouse in St

Mere l'Eglise, 60 minutes from Cherbourg, and the ferry crossings are included in the cost of £397.

□ Lyons is the centre for a three-night package by Air France Holidays (0151-742 3377). Guests stay at the Château de Pizay, a 17th-century castle, lunch at La Tour Rose restaurant and join in a cookery class. The cost of £315 includes green fees at nearby golf courses, wine tastings, dinner at Chez Paul Bocuse restaurant (3-star Michelin), flights and car hire.

□ In Italy, Arblaster & Clarke (01730 895344) offers a week's tailor-made course in Verona at La Foresteria — Dante's home in exile, and still home to his descendant Count Serego Alighieri. No pizza-and-pasta instruction here: risotto and specialist local dishes are high on the list. Each demonstration costs £65 to £70, which includes lunch. Budding chefs stay in apartments, and pay £391 with ferry crossings. £672 on scheduled flights.

□ Luxurious cooking holidays are run by the Hotel Cipriani, Venice. These are held mainly in the autumn, with classes by well-known cooks. Tours include visits to the Rialto market and tastings of olive oil and cheeses. These holidays, from five days to a week, cost from £1,726 to £2,106 per person, excluding travel. Details from Orient Express (0151-565 8366).

□ For something completely different, you can learn about Thai cooking on a weekend course at the Baithouse Hotel in Phuket. You pay £59 for tuition, a seafood meal, two lunches, a herbal sauna and a traditional Thai massage. This is in addition to the cost of the holiday — £716 to £806 for five nights' B&B. From Magic of the Orient (01293 537700).

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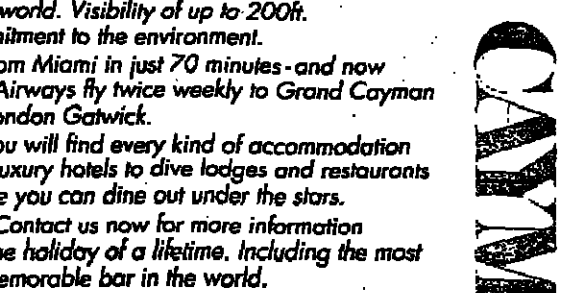
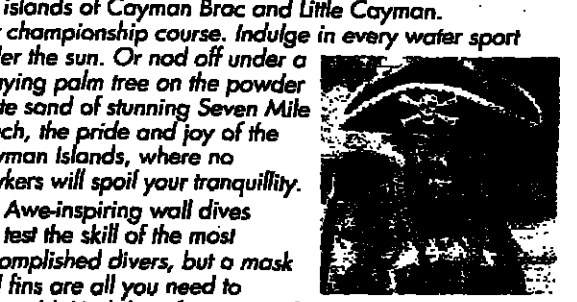
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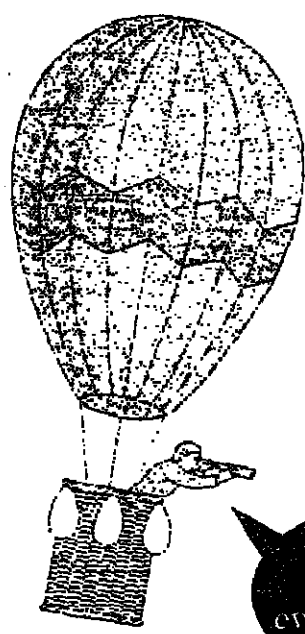
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TRAVEL

19

RURAL HOLIDAYS: Jill Crawshaw discovers welcoming cottages and farmhouses on the continent

Simple pleasures off the beaten track

RURAL holidays abroad, run by local agrotourism schemes or by specialist British tour operators, are a good way to encourage closer contact with local people, and spread the benefits that tourism can bring. Here is a range of suggestions.

SICILIAN FARMS

THE 200-year-old Azienda Mose farm shares the countryside around Agrigento, in southwest Sicily, with six Greek temples, including the ruins of the huge Temple of Jupiter (480 BC), and the preserved Concordia Temple. Life on the farm is relaxed: breakfast in the kitchen, with fresh ricotta cheese and homemade jams, and dinner on the terrace under the trees, with wine and produce from the estate. Guests use the water reservoir as a swimming pool.

Sunvil Travel says there is increasing enthusiasm for holidays on Sicilian farms from holidaymakers fleeing the impersonal, often hideous hotels of the south coast.

Most of the farms are in the richly historical region around Agrigento, so you learn about its culture, and Sicilian cooking, from the family with whom you eat.

A week's half-board, with flights, costs £543 to £561.

Sunvil also offers a number of holiday cottages in Crete, renovated as part of a conservation scheme, where visitors can become part of local life.

The Spilia cottages are in the small village of the same name, near Khania, in the western part of the island. The village has a square, church, coffee shop, two grocery stores and a post office. A week's self-catering costs £432 to £459, with flights and car.

● *Sunvil Travel, 7 Upper Square, Islington, London NW1 7BJ (0181-568 4499).*

MAGYAR MAGIC

MOST of the *puszta*, the great plains of Hungary southeast of the capital, Budapest, are largely unexplored territory to outsiders. But for those adventurous enough to tackle its Pimmo-Ugric language (many speak German, otherwise it's sign language), there are some excellent working farms and

inns (*csardas*) at low prices, some of them the homes of the famous whip-cracking cowboys, the *csikos*, that tend the plain's herds of wild horses.

At a typical farmhouse near Kecskemet, a double room costs about £27 a night. There is a supply of the "wine of the region", the fiery *barack pldinka*, apricot brandy.

At some of the village farms, the owners will come in and cook local soups and stews and other specialties, for about £4 a night.

There is more to the *puszta* than horses, horsemen and goulash: it is a venue on the migratory route of millions of birds, attracting birdwatchers from all over the world.

● *For information on bookings, other farmhouse holidays and travel, contact the Hungarian Tourist Board, PO Box 4336, London SW18 4XE (0181-871 4009).*

SPANISH SOJOURN

THERE'S a cobbler next door to the holiday cottages, an old olive press and museum beyond that, and a tiny, low-beamed inn further on which serves "grandmother's soup". And there is jagged sierra behind the whitewashed cottages with studded doors and geranium-decked balconies.

The cottages are in Benalauria, southwest Spain, one of the dazzling little *pueblos blancos*, the white towns of Andalusia — part of the local agrotourism scheme to preserve old buildings and give visitors a glimpse of rural life in the province.

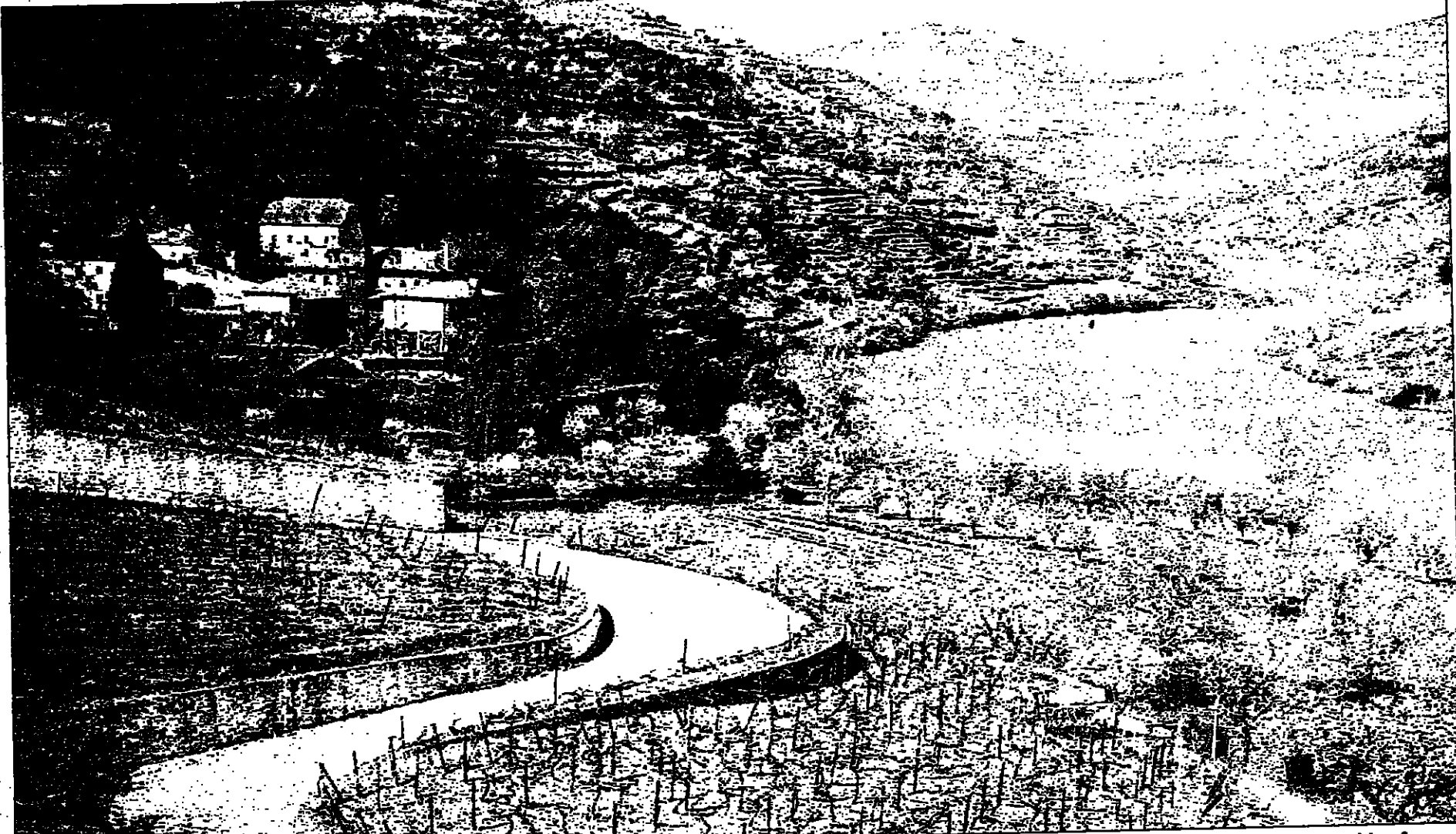
There's lots of riding in the area, paragliding nearby, and walking along old smugglers' routes and mountain paths.

Similar cottages and farmhouses (*cortijos*) are available in other *pueblos blancos* — in Algotocin, for example, or dramatic little Gaucin. The average cost is 1,550 pesetas (about £12) per person per night, often with a minimum stay of six nights.

● *Details from Rural Andalus, 0034 5 227 62 29.*

SCANDINAVIAN STYLE

FOR families who like the outdoor life — backpacking in the forest, tracking elk or beaver, canoeing up hidden creeks, or fishing for supper —



Visitors to the fertile slopes of the Douro valley in Portugal have a choice of staying at one of the many fine country houses in the region or on a traditional working farm

Scandinavian Seaways offers log cabin and chalet holidays in Sweden. The cabins are modest and rustic, but well-equipped with kitchens and bathrooms, set beneath trees or beside one of the 100,000 or so lakes, with boats often included in the cottage hire.

The cottages are dotted all over the country, from the northern "folklore" province of Värmland to the southerly Västergötland.

Package holidays that include the price of the ferry for car and passengers from Harwich or Newcastle to Gothenburg (with two nights on the ship in a four-berth cabin) cost £255 to £324 for each of two people travelling, £180 to £233 for each of four.

Log cabins in Norway, farmhouse holidays in Denmark and, for the first time, holiday villages in Finland, are also on offer.

● *Scandinavian Seaways, Harwich 01255 241234; Newcastle 0191-293 6262.*

TASTE OF MOSELLE

YOU can spend a working holiday with a wine grower in the Moselle Valley, Germany, joining in the harvest, learning about and sampling the Ausleses, and taking a river cruise from wine village to wine village. Moswin's Tours offers a week's half-board at £398, including flights at har-

vest time, or £376, if you go independently between May and September.

Other self-catering farm holidays from Moswin could be ideal for pony-mad children: a small pony is allocated free for each apartment on the Ferienhof Valz farm at Niederstetten in Bavaria's Tauber Valley, where a week's self-drive holiday for four, including the ferry, costs £772.

● *Moswin Tours, 21 Church Street, Oadby, Leicester (0116-271 9922).*

PORTUGUESE PANACHE

COUNTRY *quintas*, the fine manor houses furnished with antiques and family heirlooms, and *casas*, the distinguished country houses and farms, open their great studded doors to offer a traditional Portuguese welcome to visitors prepared to stray off the beaten track in the Douro valley, the Minho, and the hidden villages of the Costa Verde and the Montanhas.

Much of Portugal's history can be traced in the crests, carvings and the libraries of these manor houses, which have been in the same families for generations. The Solar das Arcas, a 17th-century house, with pool and gardens, near the Pena-Gerês National Park, belongs to the Passanha family, whose ancestors taught navigation to many of

the country's great sailors. Further south, the Quinta de São Lourenço in the Bairrada region, was the home of the first Viscount Seabra, who prepared Portugal's civil code, in force between 1867 and 1966.

Destination Portugal offers a choice of 89 houses — most guests like to combine two or three during a holiday — for about £25 each a night, B&B. Flights to Oporto cost £135 to £213 return, and car hire from £99 to £114 a week.

● *Destination Portugal, 37 Corn Street, Wymen, Oxfordshire (01993 773269).*

SLOVENIA STAY

SLOVENIA, "a young state with an old culture", borders Italy, Austria, Hungary, Croatia and the Adriatic. Wilma Topolsek, whose farmhouse,

near Zrece, is in walking, fishing and riding country, won awards last year for accommodation and food (she makes her own bread, cheeses and honey, and wine).

At Medjan farm, near Portoroz, guests can take rides on the seven Lippizaner horses, or on the mountain bikes, which are provided.

The farms cost £275 to £290 B&B, £290 to £320 half-board, for one week including flights.

● *Slovenija Purvica, 14 Hay Street, Steeple Morden, Royston, Hertfordshire (01763 852646).*

AND FINALLY...

COTTAGES in Cathars and country manors in the Midi, France, Ida's farmhouse in the Alps, and harbour houses in Norway's Hardangerfjord are among Inntravel's self-catering portfolio. At Corbières,

guides take you on botanical walks, to producers of wine, cheese and honey, or to visit the ruins of the 12th-century Cathar castles. The cottages cost £259 to £433 a week.

At Ida's farmhouse in Sörrenberg, Switzerland, guests can help out on the farm (£214 to £271).

Fishermen will regale visi-

tors with tall tales in Old Skudeneshavn, the old centre of Norway's herring trade, where a white clapboard harbour house at the water's edge costs £376 to £471 a week.

All these prices are for a party of two, and include ferry fares for car and passengers.

● *Inntravel, Hovingham, York (01653 628811)*

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SWINDON: An urban farm provides a breath of fresh air for city-dwellers

Just doing what comes naturally

Swindon is hardly a name to conjure up images of bucolic delight. As the taxi swung through an industrial estate, mini-roundabout by mini-roundabout, the nearest I got to a view of wide open spaces was the rolling roof of a Renault factory where the driver informed me, a James Bond film had once been shot.

Discovering Lower Shaw Farm is like discovering a new world at the back of a wardrobe. One minute I was travelling through a landscape of identikit houses and clipped front lawns, the next the taxi had veered off down an unmade track and I was scrambling out into a muddy yard.

I had arrived, it seemed, just in time for the introductory meeting. Assembled round a wood fire, the weekend guests were initiated into such arcane mysteries as which compost bin to use when, and should we wish to ignore more conventional plumbing arrangements how to avail ourselves of the eco-toilet. Then introductions all round, some in the shakily self-conscious voices of first-time visitors; others were obviously long familiar with the set-up.

A community of seven adults and seven children is permanently resident in the 18th-century farmhouse at Lower Shaw. Throughout the spring and summer they offer

weekend courses to visitors. I, and 20 enthusiasts, had come for the WWOOF weekend (Working Weekends On Organic Farms), one of four held annually. We were to stay free of charge in return for general maintenance work and seasonal jobs around the farm.

On the weekends when courses such as pottery or circus skills are offered, Lower Shaw accommodates up to 60 guests. They sleep in caravans, tents, and even yurts, the portable folding homes of the central Asian nomads. If I came back in April, I was told, I would be taught how to build one myself. But for now I was content with rather less exotic accommodation — a spartan but comfortable room in a converted caliche.

Wood was chopped, compost dug, caravans painted, and a gravel path laid. Inside, in the stone-flagged kitchen, vats of stew bubbled on the range. I was set to work moving a pile of logs, helped by Christiane, a Londoner who comes down to the farm from time to time to give her three-year-old daughter a breath of fresh air.



Children enjoy feeding the chickens and peacocks during their working weekend at Lower Shaw farm in Swindon

equipped with sturdy clothes, wellingtons, and waterproofs. Wood was chopped, compost dug, caravans painted, and a gravel path laid. Inside, in the stone-flagged kitchen, vats of stew bubbled on the range. I was set to work moving a pile of logs, helped by Christiane, a Londoner who comes down to the farm from time to time to give her three-year-old daughter a breath of fresh air.

Lower Shaw has been built like the pyramids — by team effort," said Matt Holland, a resident at the farm for 14 years, "except here we have good food and Sixties songs instead of whips." Matt used to come to Lower Shaw as a boy to make hay. Now he is a part-time lecturer in English literature and teaches on the farm's writing weekend. "The motto of Lower Shaw is 'Life is for learning'," he said. "Swindon is the largest town in Britain without a higher edu-

cation centre. People often say that Lower Shaw stands in instead. But the most important thing is that people from all walks of life can connect with each other."

He was right. By lunchtime all shyness had vanished as we basked in the sun, throwing scraps to greedy peacocks. And, by Saturday evening, gathering round the fire to sing and play games, or have a jamming session, all barriers were broken down.

Lower Shaw, with its rainbow-coloured murals and painted pots of pansies, its windmills and solar panels for energy, its bin-liner frog ponds and tiny patch of land optimistically called the permaculture forest, offers the city dweller a taste of something alternative.

Fact file

□ For a brochure, write to Lower Shaw Farm, Old Shaw Lane, Swindon, Wiltshire SN5 9PJ (01793 771080).

□ Courses at Lower Shaw Farm include: April 14-17: Easter Weekend, £72; April 28-30: Writing Weekend, £72; April 28-30: Building a Yurt, £72; May 5-8: Circus Skills, £97 (child £70); May 19-21: Zen and the Art of Haiku, £72; May 26-28: The Mystery of Avebury, £72; May 26-28: Cycling Weekend, £66; June 9-11: Pottery, £85; June 30-July 2: The Blues Experience, £72; August 7-13: Activities Weekend, £125 (less for child); August 21-27: Summer Stretch, £150.

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Where to take the children at Easter

LONDON

Selection on the menu: Easter holiday activities.

Science Museum, Exhibition Road, SW7 (071-938 5000). Ring for details. Adults £4.50, children £2.40. (S)

Workshops and activities at the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood, Cambridge Heath Road, E2 (0181-480 3204). Ring for details. (S)

BEDFORDSHIRE

National spring-clean week: clean up a local common. Five Springs car park, Marsh Farm, Luton. Tuesday, April 4 at 10am. Also 2pm on Bradders Hill (01582 491851). Children should be accompanied. Free. (S) morning event only.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Cricket course for eight-year-olds upwards. Stowe School, Stowe. Contact Sportsclass (01625 618700). April 9-13, from 9.30am-5.15pm. £16 per day. Five-day course. £80 non-residential, £150 residential. Limited disabled facilities.

CUMBRIA

The Elements talks, activities and exhibitions. Brockhole Lake District National Park Visitor Centre, Windermere (015394 46601). From April 13-19. Prices vary. (S)

GREATER MANCHESTER

Easter activities including bonnet-making and circus skills. Salford Museum & Art Gallery, Peel Park, The Crescent, Salford (0161-736 2649). April 9-23. Times vary. Free. (S)

HAMPSHIRE

Children's Easter competition: identify riddles and win an egg. The Gurkha Museum, Peninsular Barracks, Romsey Road, Winchester (01962 842832). April 11-22 (except Sundays and Mondays) from 10am. Free. (S)

KENT

Holiday fun trail: quiz for children with prizes. White Cliffs Experience, Market Square, Dover (01304-

210101). April 8-23, from 10am. Adults £4.99, children £3.50 (includes admission to museum). (S)

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Medieval village: learn about the Holy Grail and the Sheriff of Nottingham. The World of Robin Hood, Haughton (01623 860210). Open daily from 10.30am-5pm. Adults £3.95, children £2.95.

NORTHUMBERLAND

Lambing time: bottle-fed lambs and Easter chicks. Hall Hill Farm, Lanchester, Durham (01888 730300). Open every Sunday in April, including Easter Sunday, 11am-5pm. Adults £2.75, children £1.75. (S)

OXFORDSHIRE

Storytelling workshop: an opportunity for five to seven-year-olds to create their own tale. The Playhouse, Beaumont Street, Oxford (01865 798000). April 11 at 10.30am and 1.30pm. Children £5. (S)

SCOTLAND

Edinburgh puppet/animation festival: shows and workshops. Various venues. Telephone 0131-227 4349 for information. Performances until April 15. Facilities for the disabled at most events but ring first.

SUSSEX

Animal antic games: learn about animal behaviour. Drusillas Park, Alfrington, East Sussex (01323 870650). April 8-23 from 10.30am. Adults £5.30, children £4.50. (S) Easter crafts and egg hunt: make bunnies and rabbit ears. Arundel Wildlife and Wetlands Centre, Mill Road, Arundel (01903 883355). April 10-21 from 10am. Adults £3.95, children £2. (S)

WALES

The ice palace: youth performance about a girl who vanishes into a frozen waterfall. For five years upwards. Sherman Theatre, Senghennydd Road, Cardiff (01222 230451). April 11-13. 8pm. Adults £5.50, children £3.50. (S)

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


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